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*Charles Bulfinch, about 1842*



THE LIFE AND LETTERS  
OF  
CHARLES BULFINCH  
ARCHITECT

*WITH OTHER FAMILY PAPERS*

EDITED BY HIS GRANDDAUGHTER  
ELLEN SUSAN BULFINCH

*WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY*  
CHARLES A. CUMMINGS



BOSTON AND NEW YORK  
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TO THE MEMORY  
OF  
MY FATHER



## PREFACE

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FROM time to time, ever since the death of my grandfather, inquiries have been made of the family regarding the chief facts of his life and work, and several biographical notices have appeared.

Since the death of his immediate descendants left the family papers to the care of my mother, and especially since the enlargement of the State House in Boston led to a search for the architect's original plans, I have become gradually familiar with their contents, and have believed that material existed for a more complete and permanent memorial.

My grandfather was not only a builder with wood and stone. For twenty years, as chairman of the selectmen, he stood at the head of the town government of Boston, called by Henry Cabot Lodge "the most famous municipal organization of America," and contributed his share towards moulding its character and institutions, so that an historic interest, apart from his artistic career, attaches to his name. Senator George F. Hoar has written, in an address delivered before the Worcester Fire Society in 1893: "If the artist who fashions a great statue, or who paints a great picture, leave behind him an enviable fame and a fragrant memory, surely the men who have helped fashion and adorn a great city, who have laid its foundations and builded its

walls, who have given it its character and guided the currents of its history, who have made Boston Boston and Worcester Worcester, have a far better title to grateful remembrance."

In the preparation of this volume I have made use of a narrative written by my father, Rev. S. G. Bulfinch, twenty-five years ago, at the request of the Boston Society of Architects, and published in the "Daily Advertiser" of February 20, 1869, under the title, "Our First Architect;" and also of the papers referring to my grandfather in the "Memorial History of Boston," vol. iv., prepared by Mr. Charles A. Cummings, and in the "New England Magazine" for November, 1890, by Mr. Ashton R. Willard. The episode of the discoveries on the northwest coast was frequently alluded to in my childhood, but I find slight mention of it in the letters, and am therefore indebted to the graphic description of Rev. Edward G. Porter. A recent number of the "Architectural Review," vol. iii. No. 3, contains a notice by Mr. Cummings of Mr. Bulfinch's architectural works; and the history of the Massachusetts State House is treated at length by Mr. T. A. Fox in the "American Architect" for June 29, 1895.

I have printed practically entire, although in separate sections, the autobiographical sketch that Charles Bulfinch left, in his own compact and even handwriting; and I have given selections from his letters and those of other members of the family, with the correspondence relating to his removal to Washington to take charge of the work of completing the Capitol.

The gap left in his own correspondence, during the years most heavily burdened with labor and anxiety, is partially

filled by his mother's letters, in which we catch sight of his own activities and the life of Boston at that period.

My grandfather died before my birth, but I have been glad to profit by my mother's clear recollections of his personal appearance and way of life when she knew him in his old age.

It gives me pleasure to remember in connection with this work my dear and honored friend, — the friend, too, of my father and my Uncle Thomas, — the late Rev. Andrew P. Peabody, D. D., who gave to my first thought of the undertaking his valuable encouragement and sympathy.

My acknowledgments are due to Mr. Horace E. Scudder, and to the many friends who have aided me, — among others to Hon. Edward Clark, Architect of the Capitol at Washington, D. C., Professor F. W. Chandler, of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; and Mr. Ashton R. Willard, of Boston, — for their kind assistance in obtaining information. In a special manner I would recognize my indebtedness to my friend Mr. Cummings, President of the Boston Society of Architects, not only for the direct contribution he has made to the value and interest of the book in the chapter from his pen, but for his unfailing kindness and sympathy throughout.

Among the works I have consulted are: Thacher's "Medical Biographies," "The Memorial History of Boston," the Reports of the Boston Record Commissioners, Quincy's "Municipal History of Boston," Shurtleff's "Topographical History of Boston," Drake's "Old Boston Landmarks," "Rambles in Old Boston," by Rev. E. G. Porter, and the "History of the 200th Anniversary of King's Chapel."

I am aware of some of the many imperfections of the work, and it has been especially difficult to obtain reliable information regarding so large a number of buildings, but I have attempted only a general survey of them. In some cases, a more detailed description will be found in Mr. Willard's interesting study, and the more important ones are described in our local histories.

A very few passages, of a confidential character and of no general interest, have been omitted from Mr. William Lee's letters regarding the position of architect at Washington. No mention is made of Mr. Bulfinch ever meeting Mr. Latrobe, his predecessor there; but Mr. Lee, who always expresses a high admiration for Mr. Latrobe, remarks on his friendship for my grandfather, a regard which was without doubt cordially reciprocated by the architect from Boston. The story of the building of the Capitol at Washington has never been fully illustrated by original documents; and towards this end it is hoped the present volume may make some contribution.

E. S. B.

CAMBRIDGE, May, 1896.

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*It is time that fit honor should be paid also to him who shows a genius for public usefulness, for the achievement of character, who shapes his life to a certain classic proportion, and comes off conqueror on those upward fields where something more than mere talent is demanded for victory. The memory of such men should be cherished as the most precious inheritance which one generation can bequeath to the next.*

J. R. LOWELL.

THE LIFE AND LETTERS  
OF  
CHARLES BULFINCH, ARCHITECT

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INTRODUCTION

By CHARLES A. CUMMINGS

I GLADLY respond to the invitation to add some words by way of introduction to the memoir which is here presented to the public of the life and works of the first American architect of distinction. No time could well be more exactly opportune than the moment at which this book appears, in which to hold up for the study and admiration of all classes of men who love and serve their country the picture of the simple, noble, and steadfast life which makes its subject.

To the architects of the present generation — to those of Boston in particular, if I may be allowed to speak for them — Charles Bulfinch, as the earliest native architect to leave his impress on the face of the little capital, has always been an interesting figure. In the earliest days of the Boston Society of Architects, this interest was greatly enlivened by a paper which was read at one of its meetings by his son, Rev. Stephen G. Bulfinch, in which a concise account was given of his father's life, with especial reference to his architectural experience. And now, at the expiration of a full century since he entered upon his long and honorable career, his name has been, in the city of his birth, on every lip, in



connection with the threatened destruction of his greatest work, and with the determined effort to save it.

Perhaps the first thing which strikes us in reading this history is the absolute contrast between the conditions under which Mr. Bulfinch entered on his chosen profession and those which govern the practice of architecture to-day. This contrast is, to be sure, not more striking than that which exists between the prevailing manners of our day and those of a century ago. These contrasts are of course peculiar to a new country. Whatever may have been the material growth of the cities of the Old World within the century now drawing to its close, it is impossible in the nature of things that the changes either in the cities themselves or in the life of their inhabitants can have been so radical as in the cities of our own land. London and Paris, Berlin and Vienna, were as fully developed capitals—life and manners in them were as sophisticated, the arts were practiced with as much of knowledge and academic training—at the beginning of the century as at its close. But the Boston of a century ago was not a city, but a little provincial town, without wealth or the tastes and habits which are born of wealth, and entirely unfamiliar with art in any of its forms. Architecture, to its inhabitants, was represented by half a dozen “meeting-houses,”—the work either of English architects or more often of intelligent carpenters,—in which all the architectural design consisted of a steeple, adapted with more or less of skill and taste from the steeples of London in the seventeenth century; and by a score or so of colonial mansions, in which a charming domesticity of effect was gained by the naïve use of a few architectural forms, but which were scarcely to be regarded as works of architecture.

What was true of Boston was true, and generally in an

even greater degree, in other parts of the country. When in 1792 the Federal Commissioners advertised in all the principal cities and towns for designs for a Capitol and President's Mansion to be built in the new city of Washington (offering a premium of \$500 and a city lot for the accepted design), it appears to be true that, of the considerable number of plans received, only one was the work of a professional architect. The greater number were mere pictorial sketches, of no architectural character whatever, and quite incapable of being translated into practicable form.

In a community so bare of all stimulus or encouragement to artistic endeavor, one would scarcely have predicted a very brilliant future for a youth who should choose architecture as a field for the work of his life; and, indeed, Mr. Bulfinch can scarcely be said to have chosen it. A succession of circumstances, as so often happens, led him into it. The seed was sown, doubtless unconsciously to him, in his journey through Europe not long after his graduation, where, though there was apparently no study whatever, and no observation quickened by any suspicion of what his future life was to be, he was yet strongly impressed by the great monuments of Italy and France. How much he saw of France we are not told, though he had the advantage of seeing Paris under the auspices of Mr. Jefferson and M. de la Fayette. Of Italy he seems to have seen Genoa, Pisa, Siena, Viterbo, Rome, Florence, Bologna, Parma, Piacenza, and Milan, in the course of a rapid tour of three or four months. This is all. He tells us no details. How little he foresaw what might be the result of even so much of a traveler's intelligent observation we are left to conjecture. "These pursuits," he remarks in the little fragment of autobiography which he left to his children, "did not

confirm me in any business habits of buying and selling ; on the contrary, they had a powerful adverse influence on my whole after-life."

Returning from Europe early in 1787, he appears to have passed the next three or four years in uncertain attempts to determine his way of life. Of these, the first definite result was the Monument on Beacon Hill, and the next the Franklin Street enterprise, whose disastrous result on his own fortunes was perhaps, in a large view, more than offset by the necessity which it imposed upon him of devoting himself in serious earnest to the work most congenial to him. Opportunities spread out before him. In 1793 he built the first theatre in Boston, — a building of graceful, appropriate, and entirely architectural character, — and a year later he was given the commission for the new State House on Beacon Hill. He was now thirty-one years old, and his position in the little community is indicated by the fact that he had already been for four years a member of the Board of Selectmen of the town of Boston, and for three years a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and of the Massachusetts Historical Society ; while it is difficult to repress a feeling of mild astonishment when we are told that a year or two later he was made Superintendent of Police. These honorable positions did not apparently interfere with the efficient discharge of his professional duties. The State House, of which the cornerstone was laid on the fourth of July, 1795, was finished in three years, and the architect was fairly embarked on his career. The town was fast recovering from the stagnation which had been caused by the war, and by the uncertainty of political prospects. Work flowed in upon him, and buildings of every kind, public and private, rose under his hand. Of the character of these buildings, regarded as works of architecture, it is

sufficient to say that while in most of them, from the necessities of the case, a little architecture was made to go a great way, they were invariably marked by sincerity, refinement of taste, propriety, an entire freedom from excess or affectation, and an intelligent adaptation to their various needs ; while those which admitted of a distinctly architectural treatment, like the theatre, the State House, the General Hospital, exhibit a capacity for artistic composition, and a knowledge of the methods by which a monumental effect is produced, which are remarkable indeed in one whose opportunities for technical education had been so limited.

For consider once more the conditions under which this solitary architect had to practice his art. With the exception of the few and unimportant works which he had brought with him from Europe, there was perhaps not a single architectural book in the town. He had presumably no sketches of his own illustrating foreign work, for there is no indication that he ever made any freehand drawings whatever. He was the only member of his craft in New England, and was thus entirely deprived of the stimulus to activity which comes of emulation and the friction of mind with mind. He was entirely self-taught, and could have had little or no historical knowledge of architectural styles, and no familiarity with the architecture of Europe beyond the fleeting memory of a traveler. He had little facility as a draughtsman, and what he had was quite untrained. This is well illustrated by his dismay when, on assuming his position at Washington as architect of the Capitol, he first saw the drawings of his predecessor Latrobe, an English architect who had enjoyed a regular professional training in English offices.

Compare this outfit and these conditions with those with which the young architect of the present day enters on his

profession,—the architectural school, with its systematic teaching of the history and development of styles, its directed exercise in planning and designing, its rigid drill in the methods of rendering; the immense wealth of architectural precedent at the command of every student through the multiplication of books and photographs; the facility of foreign travel which opens new worlds to the instructed student; finally, and not less important than all these preparatory aids, the mutual stimulus, encouragement, and support which come from the constant association of educated men engaged in the same work.

Yet, in spite of the absence of all these incalculable advantages, Bulfinch pursued his fruitful career for twenty years and more in his native town before he was called to Washington, and, so far as we can judge from the letters which have been preserved, without discouragement or complaint, and with a result which, as I have said, is surprising. One danger, it is true, he escaped,—a danger ever present to the architect of these later days, and which has so often brought his most promising work to shipwreck,—the danger of excess, of extravagance, of that affectation which is in our day the bane of art and literature. How hard it is for the architect of to-day to use his *embarras de richesses* with the stern self-restraint and the cool judgment which so vast a choice of materials enjoins on him, none but himself can know. But any careful observer may partly understand it when in his walks abroad he remarks, in the costly buildings which rise on every hand, the extreme rarity of that virtue which is in all art the supreme grace,—the virtue of simplicity. Just as the possession of great wealth brings with it the temptation to excess in display, so the command of this great wealth of architectural precedent of all ages and all styles brings with it the temptation to excess

and incongruity in design. That temptation Charles Bulfinch never knew. But out of his slender resources he created nevertheless in his day a body of architecture which possessed the grand qualities of simplicity, dignity, repose, not without a certain modest elegance which was of the nature of the man himself. It is sorely to be regretted that the march of progress which transforms in a couple of generations every American city has left so little of his work. Those of us who remember the Franklin place, which disappeared about the middle of the century, will recognize an illustration of what I have said. A little architecture was made to go a long way. Yet the effect was distinctly architectural. The strongly marked centre, with its great open arch spanning the street and flanked by smaller arches over the sidewalks; the emphasized pavilions at the ends of the composition, with a little superior height and a modest order of engaged pilasters; finally, the gentle curve of the whole line, — this was all, but it was sufficient; and it would be difficult to-day, in any quarter of residences in the city, to point to any frontage of 500 feet of which the effect is so dignified and so attractive.

What Bulfinch was able to accomplish when the opportunity was given him for a more liberal expenditure, and for the application of the principles of design to an important public building, may still be seen in the State House on Beacon Hill, which, as it is almost his earliest work, is also unquestionably his best, — “*Consilia juventutis plus divinitatis habent.*” Measured by the modern standard, it is by no means a large building, its frontage being no more than 175 feet, while its depth is only sixty feet. There is no richness of material, brick and wood serving all the purposes of construction and decoration. Yet its disposition of parts is so happy, its treatment is so broad and simple, its sparing

ornament is so correct in itself and so judiciously used, that it produces the effect of size and dignity, combined in a remarkable degree with elegance and grace. Its site is the finest in the city, and the adaptation of the building to its site is perfect.

At the moment when this memoir appears, it seems doubtful whether the most strenuous efforts — continued now through three successive years — on the part of those who cherish this building, not alone for its architectural beauty but for the tender and glorious associations which have gathered in a hundred years around its walls and dome, will avail to save it from the destruction to which it has been devoted by those in power who despise and condemn it because it is old, and who wish to replace it by a structure more in accordance with modern methods of building, and the modern scale of architectural splendor.

The story of Mr. Bulfinch's call to Washington, of his assumption of the important work of rebuilding the national Capitol, of his modest pride in his position and in his unusual facilities for work, of the dignity and self-possession with which he adapted himself to the novel conditions of his life and practice, does but strengthen the impression of his character which we get from all the rest of his simple history. To architects, there is a strong interest in this portion of the story, which shows us, even in these early days, the same trials of patience, steadiness, and professional self-respect with which the modern practice is so thickly strewn. Witness the firmness and quiet dignity of his communications with the official persons who wished to cut down his more than modest salary, and later to send him home before his work on the Capitol was finished; in both of which instances it is good to know that he routed his opponents. It would be interesting to know how literally he confined

himself, in the rebuilding of the centre and wings, to the designs of his predecessor. We are told that his estimates for the wings was \$180,000, a sum which would indicate that the work on them was confined principally to the interior. How far, then, had he a hand in designing the noble chambers of the Senate and the Representatives, which offer so striking and mortifying a contrast to the halls in which those august bodies are housed in these later days? We are told that he had a model of the centre made in wood by Willard, of Boston, himself an architect of some distinction. How far, then, did he revise the great portico and the dome? We shall not know. What seems certain is, that on the west front — the front towards the city — the succession of terraces and steps, which make the approach to the Capitol from that side so imposing, was the work of Bulfinch; and this bears witness again to the instinct for large effects, and for the artistic adaptation of a building to its site, which are conspicuous in his earlier work.

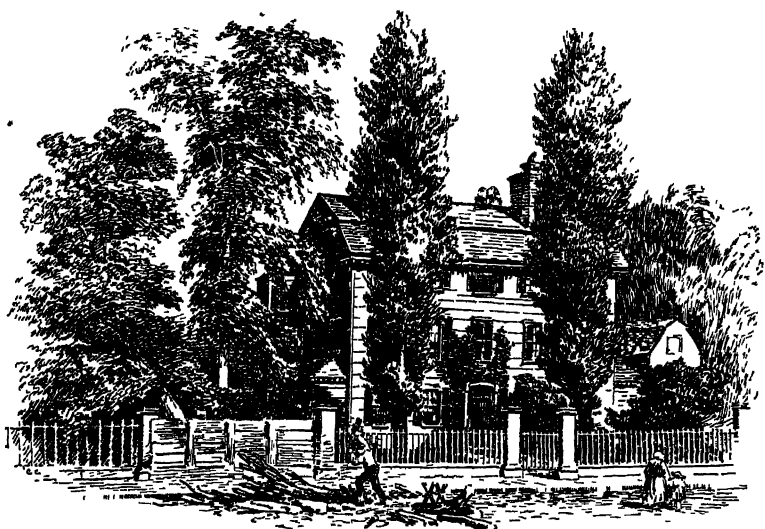
Finally, let me say that it is not only in his straightforward and consistent professional career that the life of Mr. Bulfinch offers to the architects of the present day an inspiring lesson and example. For he was from the beginning conspicuous not only as an architect, but as a good citizen, ever ready to give both time and labor to the interests of his town. How early in life his qualities were appreciated by his fellow-townsmen we have seen from the fact that he was a Selectman of the town from the age of twenty-seven. For twenty-one years he was chairman of the board; a position which he relinquished only when he left Boston to take up his duties at Washington. The contrast between the domestic politics of that early day and those with which we are familiar can hardly be more strikingly presented than by an incident which occurred towards



the close of his long term of office. In 1815, after having been some twenty years in office, he with two others of the board failed of reelection, from some cause not now to be known. "The circumstance," says Mr. Quincy in his "Municipal History of Boston," "was a subject of general regret. Every elected member of the Board of Selectmen immediately resigned, and on a second trial Mr. Bulfinch and the others were reinstated by decided majorities."

It is needless to say more. The story of this honorable and useful life, both in its public and in its private relations, is amply told in these pages. The man and the times in which he lived and worked are of the past, and one cannot but look back with a certain regret from these more strenuous days of sharp and eager competition, of lavish expenditure, of exaggerated scale, to the slower pace and the ampler leisure of the earlier time.

"But we, brought forth and reared in hours  
Of change, alarm, surprise,  
What shelter to grow ripe is ours, —  
What leisure to grow wise !"



## CHAPTER I

### ANCESTRY

1680 – 1763

When our fathers were but a few in number ; yea, very few, and strangers in the land.

When they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people. — PSALM cv.

CHARLES BULFINCH, the subject of this memoir, was born in Boston, August 8, 1763, of a family which had come from England about a hundred years earlier and settled at the historic North End of the town. His father was Thomas Bulfinch, a physician of repute. His grandfather had borne the same name and profession; and his great-grandfather, Adino Bulfinch, a merchant of Boston about 1700, is the first of the family of whom we have certain knowledge.

The name occurs at intervals in earlier records, but we

have no means of establishing the connection between individuals, or with the family of Adino. In Winthrop's Journal, edited by Mr. James Savage, on the list of those admitted to take the freeman's oath in 1642, we find the name of John Bulfinch. Among the family heirlooms was at one time an engraving with the words, "Vera effigies Joannes Bulfinch," and the same engraving is found in Bromley's Catalogue of Engraved British Portraits, recorded as follows: "John Bulfinch, Printseller, 1690; 12°, scarce. Engraver, D. Loggan." Again, in Hutchinson's History, date 1706, notice is given of a petition to Queen Anne against Governor Dudley for trading with the French and Indians, furnishing them with arms, etc., which is signed by twenty names, and among them that of John Bulfinch also occurs.

Careful researches made at different times by the family lead to the belief that Adino was not born in this country. After 1700, however, his name is frequently mentioned in the town records; and we read that in 1721 a tomb was assigned to him in the Granary Burying Ground, near the tomb of the Hancocks.

Charles Bulfinch himself writes as follows on the subject in a brief autobiographical sketch found among his papers:

"The earliest information that I have been able to obtain of any of my ancestors is from a record in the books of the town of Boston of the choice in public town meeting of Adino Bulfinch in 1707 as surveyor of highways, which choice was repeated in 1708. I also find a deed in Suffolk registry of deeds of land on the Mill Creek, on which his mansion house was afterwards built; the date of this deed was 1706, and it is observable that he has liberty by this deed to cure fish on the adjacent land, which has long since been covered most compactly with buildings. These

circumstances show that he was a man of property, and must have had a long residence in the town to have enjoyed so far the confidence of his fellow-townsmen as to be chosen by them to a responsible town office, from which I conclude that he must have arrived from England and become an inhabitant about 1680."

I find another record stating that Adino was a sailmaker by trade, a successful man and influential citizen. The large house he owned and occupied, on the borders of the "Mill Creek," was still standing in 1841.

The will of Adino Bulfinch is recorded in July 26, 1745, whereby he bequeaths a valuable property to his children. After distributing his plate and silver-hilted sword, his books and pictures, among them, together with two black women, he gives as follows: To his son William, his warehouse on Butler's Wharf; to his sons John and William, his mansion house in Marsh Lane, in equal parts, also three chaise-houses or stables; to his sons Thomas and Adino, two houses in Salt Lane and the shop over against the mansion house; to his daughter Katharine, house and land in Atkinson Street; to his sons John, Thomas, Adino, and William, house and land in Summer Street. All the above real estate subject to annuities to his two daughters.

Letters now extant show that his son Thomas, born August 26, 1694, was educated in Paris for the practice of physic, and completed his studies there in 1721, as appears by his passport from France, still kept in the family, signed by the Duke of Orleans, Regent, under Louis XV.

"It is a proof that his father was in independent circumstances and of a liberal mind, that he should send his son to Paris for education; it was the most distinguished medical school of that time; but the prejudices of our forefathers against the French were so strong that it appears

an extraordinary degree of liberality for a New England youth to be sent there for education."

It is stated in Thacher's Medical Biographies that Dr. Thomas Bulfinch, the son of Adino, obtained the rudiments of medical instruction at home from Dr. Zabdiel Boylston, and that on going abroad he studied anatomy and surgery in London under the famous Cheselden before completing his medical studies in Paris.

A letter has been preserved from Adino Bulfinch to this son, addressed, —

"For M<sup>r</sup> Tho. Bulfinch, To be Left at Mr. James Taylor Living at y<sup>e</sup> Sine of the Three Black birds in Great Eastcheap Neare Cannon Street London." This earliest family document is clearly written in a bold hand on a large sheet of paper, and runs as follows: —

BOSTON y<sup>e</sup> — Decem<sup>b</sup> 1720

LOVING SON — Yours I Received, Dated The 5<sup>th</sup> of June Last from Paris by which I am Glad of Your Wellfare, & y<sup>t</sup> y<sup>e</sup> Country Agrees w<sup>th</sup> You, & Likewise I understand y<sup>t</sup> You Design not to Leave y<sup>t</sup> Country, till Some Mounths, I am Glad of Your goeing Their it being I Doubt not but for Your Good, Though Something Charge<sup>ble</sup> I Received A Letter from Coz. Rosewell The 18<sup>th</sup> of Nov<sup>r</sup> Last, wherein he Informs me, he Received A Letter from you, Wherein You Inform<sup>d</sup> him, You Design'd To Leave France in November, So I hope y<sup>t</sup> You Are Arrived in England, before y<sup>e</sup> Writing hereof. He Acquaints me w<sup>t</sup> Money You want, he will Supply you with, to bring w<sup>th</sup> you w<sup>t</sup> you Want To Carry an End your Buisness here, And I Shall As Soon, as I know w<sup>t</sup> it is Make Return with Thanks for his Particular Service Done to You, for I keep Money by me A purpose. . . . I Wrote to You y<sup>t</sup> I belived There was not

Occasion to bring much Medicins, by Reason, There was so Many Apothecary Shops Allready, but Now upon Second Thoughts, I beleive it may do Well to bring fresh Medicins, & Sett up A Shop, for I doubt not, but You Will have A Share w<sup>th</sup> Them, & Likewise I beleive it would do Extraordinary Well to bring A Good Sober Young Man w<sup>th</sup> You, One y<sup>t</sup> has Served his Time, w<sup>th</sup> An Apothecary, And to Agree w<sup>th</sup> him for four Or five Years, at So Much P<sup>r</sup> Year, So y<sup>t</sup> You May Settle Yourself at Once, & Then you have Somebody to Look after Your buisness in Your Absence, w<sup>th</sup> I Would have You by all Means do, you know y<sup>t</sup> we have Room for You, & you Are to be at my house till You Can See & Settle Yourself better. I Would have You to Come home in One of y<sup>e</sup> First Ships in y<sup>e</sup> Spring, & Likewise to be as prudent As You Can, but To bring w<sup>t</sup> May be Nesasary & Appear Well. This is y<sup>e</sup> Last Letter I Design to Write to You, hopeing You Will not be at London Any Longer. Your Brother Jn<sup>o</sup> Went to Barbadoes, about Three Mounths agoe, & About Three days Agoe is Arriv<sup>d</sup> Safe here. Sam<sup>l</sup> is now at home for They had a Little Difference So he did not go w<sup>th</sup> him. Your Brother Adino Lives at y<sup>e</sup> Coledge, he Takes his Second Degree Next Summer, he is A Sober Young Man & I Doubt not but—please God, he Lives—Will Make A fine Man, for he Designs to follow y<sup>e</sup> Ministry. . . . Your Brothers & Sisters give Their Kind Love to You, & Long to See You. I would have You bring Some Small Thing Or Other for Each of Your Sisters, for to be Sure They Will Expect Something Or Other. If you Can gett me A good boy, bring him w<sup>th</sup> You, for my Trade & I will pay His Pasuage. Your Mother Gives her blessing to you. Give My Service to M<sup>r</sup> Button Sailmaker of y<sup>e</sup> Docks, & To his Sister if ALive. Do not forgett To give all Our Loves to Coz.

Rosewell & Thank him for All favours done for You. Not Else by [but?] my Prayer to God, to Bless you & keep You from All Evils, & To Send You A Good Voyage & Safe Return, if it may be his Will, & y<sup>t</sup> We May See One an Others faces, with joy

Your Affectionate Father

AD<sup>o</sup> BULFINCH.

The father also advises his son not to entertain an idea which had been proposed to him to enter into partnership with another doctor<sup>1</sup> on his return. "By No Means I Would not have You have any Thoughts About it. The Doctor has been Often A Talking to me About it but I said but Little to it." A long postscript contains a number of commissions to be executed in London, with a careful statement of the money sent out in charge of the ship's captain, John Osborn. Among a multitude of directions the young man is instructed to buy for one of his sisters "28 y<sup>d</sup> of Yellow flowered Pee Green, or any Other Modest Colour. You Must go to the Weavers, for You may buy it Cheaper There. She Likewise Now has sent 4 Oz. of Silver & 3<sup>s</sup> 6<sup>d</sup> in Odd Money Sterling To buy 5 y<sup>d</sup> of Three Quarter of a Y<sup>d</sup> Wide Lutestring, for a Scarfe & to gett The Veloure to Suit it." The lutestring, he is told, must be of "a deep yealer." Katharine sends for "A pair of Silk Shooes with Lase & Pattoones," and "A White Scarfe to be Dyed blew." Some items of Boston news are given. "Doct: Ellis is Dead and M<sup>r</sup> Phillup Book Seller Dyed Latly."

A letter exists from the son in France to the father in America, of which the first part, written somewhat earlier than the preceding, runs as follows:—

<sup>1</sup> This is said by Thacher to have been Dr. Boylston.

PARIS, Oct<sup>r</sup> 5<sup>th</sup> 1720 N. S

HONOUR<sup>d</sup> SIR,— I have yours of y<sup>e</sup> 25<sup>th</sup> April & 5<sup>th</sup> May and am Sorry I could not Comply w<sup>th</sup> your desire in Coming Over this Sumer, w<sup>ch</sup> I hope you'll pardon when you Come to hear my reasons, for I doe assure you it's not through anything of gaiety or Pleasure y<sup>t</sup> I take being abroad ; but purely of Instructing myself in Some Particular things relating to my Business, for I'm not Content w<sup>th</sup> y<sup>e</sup> bare name of being abroad, but am also willing (if I'm Call'd to it) to Give Some proofs of it. I am at present w<sup>th</sup> y<sup>e</sup> Greatest Manmidwife in Paris (& I might Say in y<sup>e</sup> Universe for y<sup>t</sup> business) w<sup>th</sup> whom I'm Ingag'd for 3 Months to Come. In which time shall have y<sup>e</sup> Opportunity of Deliv'g. Some Considerable Numbers, for Scarcely a Day passes but we have 2 or 3 Births ; I have deliv<sup>d</sup> Several already myself most of w<sup>ch</sup> have been preternatural Births. I'm verry well Assur'd there's not many Surgeons in Our Country y<sup>t</sup> knows much of y<sup>e</sup> Matter, Excepting my Master & there is no place like Paris to Qualify a Man for y<sup>t</sup> business ; it's what I hope will bring me in a handsome penny, Please God I prosper & gett a few years Over my head. There is likewise Several Other things to be seen into here very advantageous to one of my Business. Shall Certainly have Completed all in 3 Months after w<sup>ch</sup> Shall make y<sup>e</sup> best of my way home. I Begg Ten thousand Pardons for my long Delay, w<sup>ch</sup> I doubt not your Paternal Goodness will Excuse. Since it's like to be for my advantage, my tarry here being Longer y<sup>n</sup> I Expect<sup>d</sup>, will Occasion me to Draw for some Small Matter more upon Coz<sup>n</sup> Pray my humble Duty to my Honor<sup>d</sup> Mother. Love to Bro<sup>s</sup> & all friends to whom Due, in Particular y<sup>e</sup> Doct<sup>r</sup> & Lady. I Rem<sup>n</sup>

Your Dutifull Obbed<sup>t</sup> SonTHO<sup>s</sup> BULFINCH.



P. S. Should be Glad you had wrote me y<sup>r</sup> Opinion of Goeing into partnership w<sup>th</sup> y<sup>e</sup> Doct<sup>r</sup> w<sup>ch</sup> I think will be for my advantage & what I purpose at present to doe. If this should arrive soon enough to answer desire you would give me y<sup>r</sup> opinion.

A continuation, dated in London some months later, bears the marks of confusion and distress of mind, and is nearly indecipherable. The writer announces a great misfortune that befell him on his return from France. His cousin Rosewell, from whom he expected to receive remittances, had just sailed from Portsmouth for the East Indies, without leaving orders to pay him so much as a farthing. He writes to his father, therefore, in keen anxiety for supplies, that he may not be obliged to depend longer upon his friends, whom he thanks God he is not wholly without. He says he bears himself as cheerfully as possibly he can, but that it is not only the expense but the loss of time that he regrets, as his time now has a certain value. His going to France has given him an insight into many things which he would not have lost for 500 guineas.

"It has Cost me indeed some money to be informed in those things but I have endeavor'd to fetch it up in being a Good husband, w<sup>ch</sup> I think I may say without vanity I have been, for y<sup>e</sup> whole w<sup>ch</sup> I have had of Coz. for y<sup>e</sup> 12 m<sup>o</sup> at Paris & y<sup>e</sup> 18 m<sup>o</sup> at London is not above 136 pounds, out of w<sup>ch</sup> I have p<sup>d</sup> above 50 for my Learning in hospital midwifery." He hopes that his father will continue his paternal regard for him, and send him soon a bill of exchange, or supply his needs in any convenient way. We are glad to learn a few lines later that the money sent by Captain Osborn had been received, and, coming at so seasonable a time, was truly welcome. The partnership

plan he will wholly decline, finding his father so much against it, but prays his humble service to the doctor and his lady. The faithless and disappointing Cousin Rosewell is severely denounced, and his indignation leaves him no leisure to mention the sundry feminine purchases with which he had been charged, except to add that the silver money sister Sarah had sent out could not be heard of. We can only hope for her sake and Katharine's that it was shortly recovered, and their little commissions were not wholly forgotten.

Dr. Thomas Bulfinch returned to Boston in 1722, and we learn that he established there a very large practice, with a high reputation as a skillful physician. We are also told that he married, June 11, 1724, Judith Colman, a girl of seventeen, daughter of John Colman and his wife Judith Hobby. Mr. Colman, who was a distinguished merchant of Boston at that time, gave a lot of land at West Boston (in Bowdoin Square) to each of his sons-in-law, Thomas Bulfinch and Peter Chardon, on which each built a dwelling-house. The mansion of Dr. Bulfinch remained in his family for somewhat over 100 years, and the present "Coolidge House" now occupies that site. In place of Mr. Chardon's, writes my grandfather, "there now stands the Baptist church, with Gothic stone front."

Dr. Bulfinch had only two children, who bore their parents' names, Thomas and Judith. The daughter married Dr. Samuel Cooper, minister of Brattle Street Church, and the son was graduated from Harvard College in 1746. A valedictory oration delivered by him is still preserved by the family. One of his grandsons wrote concerning it, in later years, as follows:—

"This Oration was delivered at Harvard College in 1749, by my grandfather, Dr. Thomas Bulfinch 2<sup>nd</sup>, on taking his

Master's degree. That the Latin Valedictory was delivered by a master, see Quincy's Hist. of Harvard Coll. vol. i. p. 445. The oration also alludes, on its 4<sup>th</sup> page, to the restitution of cities taken by the French. This took place by the treaty of Aix la Chapelle, made in 1748.

"The taking of Louisbourg, in which the New England forces bore a part, which is triumphantly referred to, took place in 1745. The 'Eques auratus' (page 8) was Sir William Pepperell, who was created a baronet for that achievement. . . .

"The scanty attendance of graduates alluded to on the first page, and the absence especially of the clergy, wittily noticed on page 11, may be explained by what is stated in Quincy's Hist. of Harv. Coll. vol. ii. page 93. The Corporation made repeated attempts that year to have the Commencement exercises private, on account of the public distress from drought and scarcity, but were overruled by the Overseers. There was probably much feeling about the matter, and many of 'the stricter sort,' especially the clergy, stayed away from Commencement.

"There is extant another copy of this oration, only partially written by the author, and which I have completed from this. This appears to be the original, being much worn, as by use in committing it to memory. It is in my grandfather's handwriting, as appears by comparison with his letters. So also is the original part of the other copy."

The oration is in a handsome hand, always characteristic of the younger Thomas. At the time when he pronounced his "Vivat Rex Georgius Secundus," before the Commencement audience of that day, he was about twenty-one years old, for he was born early in 1728.

After studying physic with his father for a time, the young man followed the example of the elder and crossed

the ocean, in company with a friend, Mr. John Apthorp, to pursue his medical education abroad, first in London and afterwards in Edinburgh.

A group of letters remain which passed between the father and son. The young man arrived in England in June, 1754, and wrote from Liverpool to announce his safe arrival, anticipating much enjoyment in the journey by post-chaise to London, as the country was in all its bloom. No doubt a number of the connections and friends of the family were still living in or near London, and we have abundant proof that a close intercourse with the English relatives was kept up for many years. He soon writes from London to say that he has visited Dr. Nichols (one of his Majesty's physicians), and received much civility from him, and also the advice to begin at the foundation and board for the present at a chemist's, that he may become thorough in his preparation for his work. Dr. Nichols has himself secured him such a lodging, in Friday Street, at forty guineas per annum. He hopes that his father has disposed of his horse, and says he has sent Mr. Bowdoin the things he had desired, though he found they were much more expensive than had been estimated. (A box of glass for Mr. Bowdoin is later mentioned.) "If you can conveniently send me a couple of Qtls. of very Fine Fish should be glad you would do it, as I find it would be very acceptable to M<sup>r</sup> Lane & some other Friends here." In a later letter he describes his daily routine of duty. He rises at seven and walks immediately to Great Marlborough Street, Soho, about three miles off, where he is busied in dissection of dead bodies until four in the afternoon, and often allows himself no time to dine. At six he goes to Mr. Hunter's lecture, where he is kept till nine, so that by the time he gets home he is fit for nothing but bed. He sends home

his mother's watch and chain, which he has had repaired, and promises to insure it. As to news, an invasion is daily expected, but he is so little of a politician that instead of saying much upon that head he will send home the papers for their perusal, from which they will obtain more information than from him.

A pleasant and lively letter from the young man to his brother-in-law, Dr. Cooper, in October, 1754, gives many further particulars of his English life at this time, of his visits to Margate and Canterbury, his Sunday morning walks to his friend Mr. Lane's country seat at Clapham, and his delight at seeing Garrick in the character of Romeo.

The father, of whom we know so little since, a young man, he wrote home in such distress from London, is now a man of sixty-one, and, in his advice to the son and solicitude for his welfare, reminds us of his own father, Adino.

This is his first letter : —

BOSTON, June 16, 1755.

DEAR CHILD, — Since my last Have rec<sup>d</sup> yours by Kirkwood, Cahail, Trout, Phillips & White, with your Aunt's & Mrs. Green's things which they both like & your Mother's shade & mark, the shrubs are most of them alive. Rejoyce to hear your Illness went off so soon, hope you'll be very Carefull of your health & not be out nor up too late — Am much oblig'd to Mr. Lane for his Kindness to you, to whom pray my Compliments.

I like Dr. Nichols' advice for you to be dresser<sup>1</sup> as it will give you a much better knowledge of the business. Inclos'd you have a bill of Mr. Lechmere's on Mr. Lane for £100 Sterling, shall send you another in a little time, am willing you should live in Credit, doubt not of your prudence in

<sup>1</sup> A term employed in the London hospitals and of late adopted in this country.

your Expenses. Your Mother Intends to send your Linen by Mr. Tregothick who will sail with Capt. Cahail in about a fortnight or 3 weeks. The peppers & Barberries when the Season arrives, the Ducks as soon as I Can lite of them . . . Have Bought Sr Harry's Chariot<sup>1</sup> & sold your Horse for 150 — Give my Compliments to Mr. John Girle, am Glad to hear he is alive & well. I was acquainted with him about 35 years ago, at St. Thomas' Hospital. Chapman thanks you for his book; he behaves well, has sent a mem<sup>dum</sup> for some things which I Leave with you to do as you please. He is very desirous of y<sup>e</sup> Artichokes. As to Mr. Kilby's favours you won't want them. I would have you Settle my Acc<sup>t</sup> with him before you Come home.

Hope you won't forget writing your Mother as often as you can, she is troubled she han't had a letter from you so long. As your time is taken up you may omit writing me & what you have to say write in hers. Your Bro<sup>r</sup> & Sister Expect<sup>d</sup> a Letter in the Spring Ships. Mr. Hancock desires to be rememb<sup>d</sup> to you & hopes you'll continue writing to him, acknowledges he don't deserve it, but says he will write by the Spring Shippis.

I thank God we are all well, your Mother is perfectly recov<sup>d</sup>. All friends desire to be rememb<sup>d</sup> to you.

Your Affct. Father

THO<sup>s</sup> BULFINCH.

Trout goes down in half an hour, so can't write any more.

Again the son writes to his mother: "In my letter per — I desired you would send me half a dozen Hams; they are for a very particular Friend, who has been extremely kind to me since I have been here; I should be very glad

<sup>1</sup> Sir Harry Frankland's "princely residence" was on Garden Court Street, next to Governor Hutchinson's.

they might be made at home, but if this is too much Trouble for you I should be glad you would give particular orders about them, & send me an ac't. of the cost, as he insists upon paying for them. If you could send a Barrell Cranberrys to Mrs. Lane it would be extremely wellcome. If you send the Hams direct them for Mr. John Goddard in Cannon St. This I mention in Case I should not be in London." In a letter of which the beginning is missing he asks the opinion and advice of friends at home in regard to some plan of which we are now ignorant. It was possibly the plan of studying in Edinburgh. "I hope that not only you, my Mother, Brother & Sister will think for me, but that you will also mention it to Col. Henchman, Mr. Hancock, Father Lechmere, Uncle Chardon, Col. Pollard, Mr. Green & Mr. Wm. Cooper."

Having decided in favor of going to Scotland, he writes as follows after his arrival in Edinburgh (his son Charles tells us that he boarded in the same family with Dr. Robertson, the historian) : —

EDINBURGH, Dec' 28, 1756.

HON<sup>d</sup> SIR — I have now the pleasure to inform you of my safe arrival here; after a very agreeable Journey, in which I took both Hull & York in my way — and to my no small satisfaction find that the Character I had of this place, in respect of the Phisical Advantages which it has over London is true; besides which I have been so lucky as to fix in a family, where there is nothing wanting but the Language to make it truly English. Soon after my Arrival I was seized with a violent Dysenterick Fever owing partly as I imagine to my too close application to Business, partly to Change of Climate; however by the great Care of my Kind Landlady, & the Skill of one of the greatest Physicians in Europe, Dr. Whytt, I am now thoroughly

recover'd, and enabled to prosecute my Studies with as much Ardour as ever. As this is but a barren place in respect of News, perhaps it may not be disagreeable to you, if instead thereof, I give you a short Sketch in what manner I employ myself here, as far as relates to the several Classes which I attend at the College. At Ten in the morn<sup>g</sup> Dr. Whytt begins his lecture on the Theory which continues till Eleven, & from Eleven to Twelve Dr. Rutherford Lectures on the Practice of Physic. From Twelve to one I attend the Infirmary, from one to two I attend Dr. Cullen's Lectures in Chemistry, from three to four Dr. Monro on Anatomy, and this is the round I have every Day save Saturday and Sunday, besides attend<sup>g</sup> a Clinical Lecture twice a week after the other Business of the Day is over. By Entering thus regularly, as I am enabled to do, from D<sup>r</sup> W. & R.'s Lectures, into the Nature, Make & Use of the several parts of the Human Body, I am the better able to form a judgment of the Nature & Cause of Diseases, and of the best methods to pursue in order to their Cure. Many of my Friends in London were surpris'd at my coming here, thinking that every Advantage might be obtained with them, but I must beg leave to dissent from them & I am well assured that if I had come here as soon as I arrived in England I should have made much greater progress in the Knowledge of my Business than I did in London, even admitting I had not applied so close to it as I did there. However, I hope it is not now too late. The Professors here are very sensible that they have been too free in granting their Diplomas & are determin'd to retrieve the Credit of their University, by granting them for the future only to those who are very deserving. To this End they have agreed that no one shall have that Honor bestowed on them, without having lived here such a number of Years &



attended all the several Classes, after which they are to undergo a very severe Examination. Now as my Stay here will be but for a Short Time it is uncertain whether they will admit me to an Examination for a Degree, however by the Influence of some Gent<sup>y</sup> here to whom I had Recommendations from Gent<sup>n</sup> of the Business in London, I hope to be able to obtain an Examination, but I am well assured this cannot be done, unless I tarry here till the month of July or August; so that you must not expect me home till the fall, if you are desirous of my returning with a Diploma. The world is led away with a Notion that an English Degree is more Honorary than a Scotch one, but I am very sure that the Examination for a Scotch one is the severest.

Yesterday I received yours & Mr. Cooper's Letters of the 16 Nov<sup>r</sup> by which I perceive the melancholy Scituation of your affairs in Respect of the War. However, I hope that by the Conduct of Lord Loudon they will soon take another turn. The Death of poor Nat. Cunningham surpriz'd me much, he had but short Enjoyment of the Advantages which his superior Fortune gave him. Mr. & Mrs. Kilby were extremely handsome to me in London, therefore I think the like Civilities are due to Mrs. Cunningham, especially as she now is in a manner friendless. I have so often made excuses to my Friends for not writing them that I am ashamed to repeat them again, particularly I beg Pardon of Mr. Wm. Cooper and Mr. Minot for Neglecting them as I have but I hope they will be so Kind as to remember that close Attention to Business only could have caus'd so great a Neglect. I should also with ——— Pleasure address myself to Father Lechmere, Mr. Hancock & many others, but it is impossible, nor can I, I fear, get time enough to write my Dear Mother, Bro. & Sister. However I will embrace the first Leisure Moment I have to accomplish this. I am sorry

Father Lechmere does not incline to draw any more as his Bills were always good, and attended with no trouble, being always ready in Mr. Lane's hands, but I don't doubt your Care in procuring me others, & I must not forget to tell you that my good Friend Mr. Lane gave me a Letter of Credit in Scotland without Limitation, which I take as a great Instance of his regard. I have not else to add Hon<sup>d</sup> Sir, save Duty to my Dear Mother Love to Bro<sup>r</sup> & Sister & that I am

Your Dutifull Son

THOMAS BULFINCH.

Addressed to  
Doct<sup>r</sup> THOMAS BULFINCH  
in Boston

P<sup>r</sup> Capt. Spender, London 15 Feb. 1757

Rec'd & forwarded by Sir y<sup>r</sup> most obed. serv<sup>ts</sup> Lane & Booth

The second and last letter from the father runs as follows : —

Boston, Feb. 21, 1757.

DEAR CHILD — I wrote by Robson, Volnigh & Mortimer & sent you Mr. Lechmere's 1, 2, & 3<sup>d</sup> bills of Exch<sup>e</sup> on Messrs Lane & Booth for £100 Sterling & sent M<sup>rs</sup> Lane in Mortimer a Cask of New York biskit. . . . If you return Home in the Spring this may probably be one of the last letters you may receive from me. I have sent by this Conveyance an Invoice of Drugs & medicines in a packet to be left at Mr. Lane's untill you return from Scotland, which would have you bring with you, the Cost will be about £12 Sterling. I sent you formerly all my Instruments except the Silver catheter & Gorget, 1 pair of large probe scizars, & Case of Dissecting Knives which are but Indifferent & would have you gett a new sett, & Case of needles, my Gorget is too short for the new way of Cutting for the

Stone, you had best gett 2 longer ones, a cutting one, I have lent or lost my Trocar & long steel probe. . . .

Shall send you by next a bill of £50 sterling & would have you buy us a Case of Silver handled knives and forks with partitions for a Dozen of Spoons & 2 Dozen Ivory handle D<sup>o</sup> for our case, several of them being broke, let the blades be good. A pair of Lamps for the Chariot, a wigg for myself, such a Colour as you sent before & half a Dozen p<sup>r</sup> of Thred Stocking Some Stocking & Gloves for y<sup>r</sup> m<sup>o</sup>. Some flowering Shrubs that you sent before are all dead. A coat for your neice, you will find the pattern for it in y<sup>e</sup> packet, Some mittins for your Sister & both her child<sup>n</sup>.

I would advise you to Come Home in a Man of War if any should be orderd here or to Hallyfax, or in a Mastship who allways are allowd convoy, or in the packet to New York; if the war continues the danger will be very great in our Common Vessels, what you send in them would have you fully Insure. It would not be amiss for you to get a letter of Credit from some Gentleman in London to some person in France in case you should be taken, y<sup>t</sup> you need not be Confined in a Goal. If this meets you in Scotland & you can procure a Diploma for Mr. Cooper would have you get it, the Charge will not be much. . . .

My Dear Child I comēd you to a Good & Kind providence & pray that we may have a happy Sight of Each other & remain

Your Affectionate Father

THO<sup>s</sup> BULFINCH.

M<sup>r</sup> Booth Sent y<sup>e</sup> Claws

& Slaybells by Bruce

which I rec<sup>d</sup>

you may bring me a pocket Salvatory.

The series closes with the following letter from the son :

LONDON, November 7<sup>th</sup>, 1757

HON<sup>d</sup> SIR — Your favours of the 1<sup>st</sup> of August p<sup>r</sup> Spender & Cowley came safe to hand, & the bill inclosed met with due honour. I can't but take notice of your kind provision for me, notwithstanding your Complaints of not hearing from me; but you may be assured that whatever my Neglects have been in the year past, I am however not insensible of the Duty and Obligation which I owe you. I have now the pleasure to inform you that on the 6<sup>th</sup> ult<sup>o</sup> I was honour'd with a Degree of D<sup>i</sup> of Physic in the University of Edinburgh, and that I am once more safely arrived in London; But altho' I passed the several Examinations previous to my Graduation to the intire approbation of the Professors, yet I am not a little anxious when I reflect on the Importance of the trust on which I am entering. The Thesis which I have published (the Subject of which is *De Crisibus*) I have inscribed to Dr. Nichols. I own that the Duty and Affection which I owe to you demanded rather that I should have addressed [it] to you, but my reasons for dedicating it to the D<sup>r</sup> will I doubt not be very satisfactory to you, when I have an opportunity of giving them to you at large. At present I shall only say that I have adopted an opinion of his, of the Soul's Influence over the Functions of the Body, thereby regulating and governing its several actions, an Hypothesis which to some appears highly ridiculous & absurd, but owing I imagine chiefly to their not duly considering the matter. The Hypothesis is not new for it is as old as Plato, & is embraced by the celebrated Stahl of Germany, Porterfield of Edinburgh, & many other very learned men, but none have carried it quite so far as Dr. Nichols, as you will see by his elegant production *de Anima Medicâ*. I fear I shan't be able to send you any of my Theses by this Conveyance but you may expect some

by the next. But now methink, I hear you say, well Child, since you have been from me so long, and have executed the plan which you proposed at setting out, is it not time to think of returning home? 't is true indeed, S<sup>r</sup> I have been long from you and little did I think when I left you that I should prove so expensive to you, but however I hope that your kindness & my Endeavours will not all be lost, altho' I confess that the progress which I have made bears but very small proportion to the ample field in which I have been engaged. As a proper Theory is the surest foundation on which to build future practice, I have therefore been engaged in the year past in that pursuit, well knowing how great Advantage I shall receive from your extensive Knowledge in Practice, when it shall please God to give us a meeting. The greatest Inducement which I have to continue longer in this place is, that by my acquaintance with a very worthy Gent<sup>n</sup> first Physician to the Middlesex Hospital I have an Opportunity of attending the Business of the Hospital Gratis, nay farther, another Physician of the same Hospital being gone into the Country to settle, his part of the Business of the house falls into the hands of my Friend first mentioned, who has made me the offer of managing this part for him, so that I have an opportunity of prescribing myself and trying whatever methods may be agreeable to me. If the Gent<sup>n</sup> mentioned gives up his place as Physician, which if he settles in the Country he must, I have interest sufficient to get chose in his room, provided I can stay in London another Year. However as I imagine this will not be agreeable to my Friends, I shall content myself with being only Assistant Physician during the winter Season; whereby I shall get as much Knowledge tho' not so much Credit as if I was principal. I have endeavor'd since I have been in England to intermix as much pleasure

with Business as I could conveniently, however not quite so much as I could have chose, and my Friends all advise me now, to relax myself a little more during this Winter, which I can very well do, since the Business of my Hospital will take up only 2 or 3 hours in the forenoon. But then how can I think of heaping farther Expence upon you, when I have already so far exceeded the Bounds I had proposed, indeed it will be but for one winter more & then I hope to return to you, no longer to be an Expence, but by the Blessing of God a Comfort and Credit. Not but that I must say a Tour into Italy for a Twelvemonth or so would not be disagreeable, but this I dare not think of. . . . If I accept the place just mentioned I must put on a great Wig, & all the Pomp of the Physician, which is the only objection I have to it. . . . I dined with Dr. Nichols a few Days ago. He thanked me for the fine Bearskin & likes it so well that he does not intend to use it till he has a new Chariot, which he has lately bespoke. I have got yours, my Mother's & Sister's Directions for sundry things which I shall take [pains] to comply with, but as it is so long since the measures for my Niece's Coat were taken I fear it will not answer, however will manage as well as I can. I am very glad Mr. Lechmere has given me a Letter of Credit as it is very uncertain what money I might want. You will excuse me if I should be a little more Extravagant this Winter than formerly, as it is impossible to live genteely here & attend publick places without a very considerable Expence, but I shall endeavour at the same time to be as frugal as I well can. I am Dr. Sir wishing the continuance of your health

Your Dutifull Son

THOMAS BULFINCH.

One month after the date of this letter, on December 2, 1757, the elder physician died at his home in Boston, so that the writer never saw his father again. The trip to Italy must have been abandoned at once, as the young man returned directly to America, to take up his father's practice and carry it on alone, putting his new wisdom to the test of immediate experience, but deprived of the companionship and the sympathy which both had hoped for. The father is said by Dr. Cooper, in an obituary notice, to have been "a constant, unshaken friend, a lover of English liberty, of good order and good government. . . . The public have reason to regret his loss, not only as an excellent physician, but as a good citizen, whose example was beneficial to the community."

On September 13, 1759, the young Dr. Bulfinch was married to Susan Apthorp, daughter of a family well known to Boston historians, and especially identified with the chronicles of King's Chapel. Her father was Charles Apthorp, a distinguished merchant, also paymaster and commissary to the British forces quartered in Boston. His name and virtues are commemorated by a marble tablet on the northern wall of King's Chapel, the building he had founded with Governor Shirley, and which owed much to his generosity and zeal. In his day he was called the richest man in Boston, and rich in children he would certainly be considered in modern times, for his family numbered eighteen sons and daughters, of whom it is said that fourteen lived to maturity, and that it was a goodly sight to see them gathered around the family table.

Charles Apthorp, educated at Eton, was the son of John Apthorp and Susan his wife, whose maiden name was Ward, of the family of Lord Ward, of Bixley, now Bexley, in England.

His wife, Grizzell or Griselda Eastwicke, was descended

from the Sir John Lloyd who assisted in conveying Charles II. to France after the battle of Worcester. The portraits of Charles Apthorp and his wife Griselda represent them as a stately and prosperous couple, seemingly fully equal to the duties entailed by their numerous family. The attitude of the lady is peculiarly lofty and spirited.

Her early years were passed in the Island of Jamaica, and there is a tradition that her father, finding it difficult to procure the instruction for his daughter then considered proper for a young girl, placed her under the charge of his sons' tutor, to share their lessons, and her education was therefore much superior to what many women of that period enjoyed.

It is certain that her daughter Susan, who came as a bride to the mansion house in Bowdoin Square, was a woman of marked intelligence and cultivation, and throughout her long life commanded more than ordinary regard from her children and associates.

A fine portrait by Blackburn, owned by one of her descendants,<sup>1</sup> represents her near the time of her marriage, a pretty creature in gray silk and white lace, with dark hair, and bright eyes full of animation and mischief. The young doctor, in his "Romeo" letter, had hinted feelingly at a sympathy with lovers' woes, and, if it was Susan Apthorp who then ruled his thoughts, we cannot marvel. We know less of this interesting period of her youth than of her later life, when her own letters and the descriptions of Dr. Freeman and others bring her near to us. "Nature had given her intellectual powers of uncommon vigor," writes Dr. Freeman. She was the child of fancy and wit, but had been educated by religious parents in the strictest principles of purity and virtue. In later days, her deportment is said to have been "erect and dignified. It inspired respect and frequently awe."

<sup>1</sup> Mr. J. T. Coolidge, Jr.



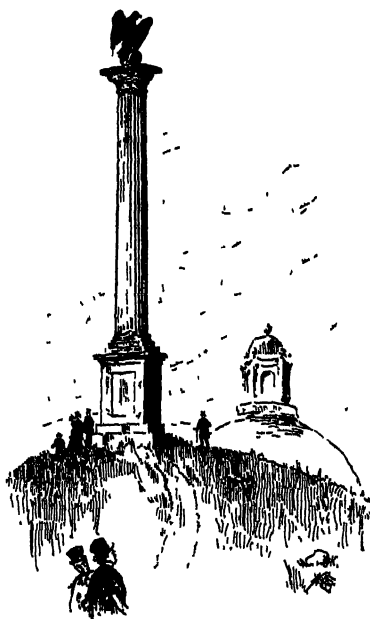
## CHAPTER II

### YOUTH AND FOREIGN TRAVEL

1763 - 1787

So before our vision did hope hang over the future,  
Luring our eyes abroad into newly opening pathways.

GOETHE.



It is difficult for any one now, standing in Bowdoin Square and watching the city crowds as they throng the sidewalks and surround the electric cars constantly coming and going, to form an idea of what it resembled in 1763, a dozen years before the Revolution, and picture to the mind's eye the country roads and green fields of West Boston, where the Chardon and Bulfinch houses stood side by side. The square was even then the seat of several other

fine residences, half hidden among their stately trees, and was one of the aristocratic centres of the town. But the neighborhood was still sparsely settled, and much of the

area west of it, Drake tells us, was in its primitive condition of fields or pastures. The old building of the West Church, near by, was standing then, replaced since by a more modern structure; and not far off upon the hill may have stood the ancient windmill known to have been there in earlier times.

Dr. Thomas Bulfinch owned, beside his mansion with its garden, stable, and grounds on the east side of the square, a lot of four acres, known in the records as Bulfinch's pasture, on the opposite side of the road, in the region then known as "Valley Acre," lying between Beacon and Pemberton hills. It was bought by the first doctor while his son was abroad, and remained in the family for some fifty years. We read of many such pastures at that time,—Middlecott's, Atkinson's, Stanley's, and others. The exact dimensions of this are still preserved. It included the present site of the Revere House, and ran back on Cambridge Street probably as far as Bowdoin (then Middlecott), following this up the hill to near Ashburton Place. The remaining boundary is no doubt marked by the present Bulfinch Street.

The Boston of that time was the Boston of the royal governors and the Province House, and of many meetings of patriots in the famous old taverns of the North End.

The pedagogue, Master Johnny Tileston, had just succeeded Zachariah Hicks as the head of the north writing school, and his quaint figure could often be seen in the street while he set his watch by the clock on the Old South Church.

The year before this, the Paddock elms had been planted, that for more than a century cast a grateful shade over Tremont Street and the Granary Burying Ground, now sadly missed in the scorching summer days. From his

house and shop opposite, Captain Paddock could keep them well in sight, watching over their growth and safety, and he now and again found occasion by public notice to warn the "youth of both sexes" not to molest them.

In this very year the first public coach of the town was established. It ran between Boston and Portsmouth, the headquarters being at the sign of the Lighthouse, at the North End, and was known as the Portsmouth Flying Coach. To save the inconvenience of the ferry, the stage and horses were kept across the water at Charlestown, for the town had then no bridges to the mainland.

Dr. Bulfinch and his wife Susan had eight children in all, of whom but three attained to their majority. A Bible in two ponderous volumes gives us the family register for several generations. It bears first the curious autograph of Charles Apthorp, dated 1751, and just below is that of his son, East Apthorp, at Cambridge, 1760. It is then, in the next year, given by East to his sister, Mrs. Bulfinch, and by her in 1777 to her "dear son Charles;" while a note, to be explained by the disturbed condition of the times, requests any stranger, into whose hands the book may fall, to return it to the family.

Charles was the second child, and the first to survive infancy. Of his early years we know almost nothing. One relic alone of his boyhood has come down to us in the shape of a small copy of "*Dialogorum Sacrorum*," almost black with age and childish handling. The fly-leaves are covered from top to bottom with schoolboy scribblings, and it is inscribed "Charles Bulfinch, his Book, Bought of Mr. Bowes, July 16<sup>th</sup> 1773." On the inside cover are two pen-and-ink drawings of rather shaky little columns, less than three inches high, and somewhat after the Corinthian order.

We know further that his companion and playmate must

have been his sister Susan, or "Sukey," a bright and lovely girl, three years younger than himself, whose early death — on her fifteenth birthday — left her parents broken-hearted, and made a deep impression on the family history. Some of her childish toys were sacredly cherished, and handed down to later generations : a mourning ring marked "Sukey Bulfinch" still exists, and her portrait, a pastel painting, shows us her smiling, pretty face with its bright hazel eyes and soft waves of brown hair.

An old copy of the "Boston Gazette" for November 12, 1781, has been carefully kept. It contains the great news of the surrender of Lord Cornwallis, and, besides this and of nearer significance, there is a touching notice of the death of the young girl, "Miss Sukey."

Two younger sisters, Anna and Elizabeth, completed the family, and it seems probable, from what we know, that the widowed grandmother, Madam Grizzell Apthorp, often made her home with them. A beautiful portrait of Elizabeth, the youngest child, afterwards Mrs. Coolidge, is owned by her descendants. Tradition says that Sukey, though so young, had already become affianced to Mr. Jonathan Freeman ; and that Anna was for a long time courted by Sir Roger Hale Sheaffe, the gallant Bostonian, who won his honors abroad, but that her mother was unwilling to spare her to his distant home in England.

Meantime a number of the relatives were already settled, more or less permanently, on the other side of the water. Mrs. Bulfinch's brother, the Rev. East Apthorp, first rector of Christ Church in Cambridge, returned to England in 1764, and his family have since resided there. Her eldest sister, Grizzell, had married Barlow Trecothick, afterwards Lord Mayor of London, and other members of her large circle of brothers and sisters were spending long intervals in Europe.

With Dr. Bulfinch himself we are already acquainted through his early letters. There are none remaining in the family which belong to a later period, and perhaps from this cause his image lacks something of the warmth and clearness with which the character of the earlier Thomas comes before us. Dr. Thacher records of him that he was of an active, healthy frame, and distinguished for an uncommon attraction of person and elegance of manners, with a mild and unassuming character ; that he enjoyed a large share of very genteel practice, living in handsome style and keeping a chariot ; and was greatly valued and respected by all his patients. He was a decided friend to the rights of the colonies, but remained in Boston during its occupation by the British, and suffered the loss of a large quantity of medicine, forcibly taken by order of the British general for the use of the troops, without acknowledgment or remuneration. Among his friends were Governors Hancock and Bowdoin.

He is said to have been unwilling to have his portrait painted, but we have a black silhouette, taken after the fashion of the time, with braided cue tied with ribbon bows. His medicine chest and silver pill-box have likewise come down to us. The family chronicles dwell upon his benevolence, for which his profession gave ample opportunities, and describe him as having, in the language of the day, "a fine flow of cheerfulness."

An episode of this period should find a place here, as Dr. Bulfinch was, from his connection with King's Chapel, a chief actor in it.<sup>1</sup> This was no less an event than the separation of that church body from the communion of the Protestant Episcopal Church. We read in the "Memorial History of Boston," vol. iii. pp. 450-452, in Bishop Brooks's

<sup>1</sup> He was himself baptized, June 30, 1728, at the church in Brattle Square, where the family belonged at that time.

account of the Episcopal Churches of Boston, that before the Revolutionary War was ended, and while their house of worship was still used by the congregation of the Old South, in September, 1782, the wardens of King's Chapel — Dr. Thomas Bulfinch and Mr. James Ivers — invited Mr. James Freeman, a young man of twenty-three years of age, then living at Walpole, to officiate for them as reader for six months. In the course of the next two years, Mr. Freeman told his parishioners his opinions had undergone a change, and he therefore offered for their use an amended form of prayer and worship, more suited to his present belief. The church accepted these amendments, though still calling themselves Episcopalians, and wishing to form a part of the new Episcopal Church of the United States. But when Mr. Freeman applied to Bishop Seabury for ordination, the Bishop, after asking advice of his clergy, did not think fit to confer orders upon him on such a profession of faith as he thought proper to give. Mr. Freeman also failed in his application to Dr. Provoost at New York. Thus ended the effort for Episcopalian ordination, and on November 18, 1787, after the usual Sunday evening service, the senior warden of the King's Chapel, Dr. Thomas Bulfinch, acting for the congregation, ordained Mr. Freeman to be "rector, minister, priest, pastor, teaching elder, and public teacher" of their society. Of course so bold and so unusual an act excited violent remonstrance. A protest was sent forth by certain of the original proprietors of the Chapel, to which the wardens issued a reply. Other protests from Trinity Church, Newburyport, and Portsmouth followed, without leading to any change of attitude on the part of the society, and "from the day of Mr. Freeman's ordination the King's Chapel ceased to be counted among the Episcopal churches of Boston."

Bishop Brooks goes on to say that "the whole transaction bears evidence of the confusion of the ecclesiastical life of those distracted days. The spirit of Unitarianism was already present in many of the Congregational churches of New England. It was because, in the King's Chapel, that spirit met the clear terms of a stated and required liturgy, that that church was the first to set itself avowedly upon the basis of the new belief. The attachment to the liturgy was satisfied by the retention of so much of its well-known form; and the high character of Mr. Freeman, and the profound respect which his sincerity and piety and learning won in all the town, did a great deal to strengthen the establishment of the belief to which his congregation gave their assent."

A strong regard and attachment was felt for Dr. Freeman by Dr. Bulfinch and his family, and for two generations his descendants continued to find their religious home in King's Chapel.

We give now that portion of the autobiography in which Charles refers to his early years, his youth, and foreign travels:—

I have now arrived at the mention of circumstances of my own life, connected with important events; but a detailed autobiography would include so many individuals with whom I have been connected that I shall only give a general summary. I was born in 1763, considered as a year of triumph; the peace with France having just been effected, after a successful war, in which Canada had been conquered, & all fear of a formidable enemy on the frontier had been removed. My earliest recollections are of the altercations and political disputes occasioned by the attempts of the mother country to raise a revenue in the colonies, of

the resistance to the Stamp Act, of the destruction of the tea in Boston harbour, of the firing upon the citizens in State street, then called King street, Mar. 5, 1770, of the blockade of the port, and removal of the Custom house to Salem, of the arrival of the British troops & of their encampment on the Common & Fort hill; of the fight at Lexington, & the battle of Bunker hill, which I saw the progress of from the roof of our dwelling house; of the continuance of the siege of Boston & of the evacuation of the town by the British troops on March 17, 1776.

After the return of the inhabitants to Boston the town schools being reorganized, I was readmitted to the Latin school under Mr. Hunt & fitted for College, which I entered in 1778, and graduated in 1781. The class consisted of only 27, and it now appears extraordinary to me that the parents of even that small number could determine to pursue an expensive education of their children at a time when the war was raging & business interrupted, but I think it proves the general confidence in the success of the cause. This small class included several who have done honour to their College and have been distinguished in public life; Dudley A. Tyng, Judge Davis, Judge Paine, the Rev<sup>d</sup> B. Howard, and Hon. Sam<sup>l</sup> Dexter & others.

My disposition would have led me to the study of physic, but my father was averse to my engaging in the practice of what he considered a laborious profession, & I was placed in the counting room of Joseph Barrell, Esq., an intimate friend & esteemed a correct merchant; but unfortunately the unsettled state of the times prevented Mr. Barrell from engaging in any active business, so that for except about three months of hurried employment, when he was engaged in victualing a French fleet in our harbour, my time passed very idly and I was at leisure to cultivate a taste for Archi-



ture, which was encouraged by attending to Mr. Barrell's improvement of his estate and [the improvements] on our dwelling house & the houses of some friends, all of which had become exceedingly dilapidated during the war. Coming of age about this time, an Uncle, George Apthorp died in England, and a portion of his property, about £200 Stl<sup>g</sup>, came to my parents, who devoted it to my use for a visit to Europe. I accordingly embarked in June, 1785, and returned Jan. 1787. The time of my visit to Europe was passed, partly in London & in visits to friends of my family in different parts of England; in a visit to France & through that country to Italy. At Paris I tarried some time to view its buildings & other objects of curiosity, to which I was introduced by letters from the Marquis La Fayette & Mr. Jefferson, then minister there. From Paris I proceeded in the spring of 1786 through Nantz & Bordeaux & by the canal of Languedoc to Marseilles & then to Antibes, from which place I crossed in an open feluca to Genoa, thence to Leghorn & Pisa, by Viterbo & Sienna to Rome, where I remained three weeks, & then returned by Bologna, Florence, Parma, Placentia and Milan over the Alps by Mont Cenis, to Lyons & again to Paris: after a short stay there, I returned to London by way of Rouen & Dieppe, crossing the channel to Brighton. This tour was highly gratifying, as you may well suppose. I was delighted in observing the numerous objects & beauties of nature & art that I met with on all sides, particularly the wonders of Architecture, & the kindred arts of painting & sculpture, as my letters to friends at home very fully express; but these pursuits did not confirm me in any business habits of buying & selling, on the contrary they had a powerful adverse influence on my whole after life.

The letters which follow, written at the time of his foreign travels, are addressed to his parents, excepting one to his intimate friend, George Storer.

An allusion is made in the second letter to the "Church plate" of King's Chapel. This ancient communion plate was the gift of King William and Mary, George II., and George III. Part of it had been distributed before the Revolution to other parishes of the church in New England. That portion here referred to, which was carried away by the last royalist rector on the evacuation of Boston, amounted to 2,800 ounces of silver. This property was never recovered by King's Chapel.

TO DR. THOMAS BULFINCH.

LONDON, August 12<sup>th</sup>, 1785.

DEAR SIR—I have been anxiously waiting for an opportunity to inform you of my safe arrival, & agreeable situation in this city, as I knew you would be desirous of the earliest information. This I shall send by Capt. Fellows & will only inform you of matters in general terms; by Capt. Lyde who will sail in 2 or 3 days, I shall write particularly. This I am the more inclined to do as I have had a hint that Fellows is to stop at some out port to take on board a cargo of salt; and in that case Lyde will arrive before him.

Notwithstanding your good wishes, & our sanguine expectations, our passage, considering the season, was rather long and disagreeable. After being out about a fortnight we lost one of our masts, a very unfortunate circumstance, for our ship at best was a very dull sailor & under such a disadvantage we were fearful of a very tedious passage. With an agreeable circle in the cabin & as excellent a captain as ever was on the sea, we contrived to pass our time pleasantly, in spite of sea sickness with which I

was particularly afflicted. The sight of land filled us with pleasure, & we landed the 20<sup>th</sup> of July, early in the morning, after a passage of 36 days, without including the week we spent against our will, in Boston harbour. Portsmouth, where we landed, is 72 miles from London; we however resolved to push on & taking post chaises, arrived about eleven at night in this city. This is, in my opinion, the best time to enter London, you are astonished with the splendour from the immense number of lamps, & there is a sufficient degree of obscurity to make a sublime scene. Mr. Borland, who had been before in England, was our guide; he carried us to an inn where we recruited after our fatigue, & the next day I called upon Mr. Wheelwright; he received me with the greatest civility & insisted upon my tarrying with him while in London. He is very agreeably situated in one of the handsomest streets of the city in the neighborhood of Mrs. Green & Mr. Joy. Mrs. Wheelwright is a very pleasing little woman, & they have one little girl, who, you may suppose, is a great favourite.

I have been engaged ever since my arrival in gratifying my curiosity with the sight of buildings &c &c, & find I have still a great deal to see. I have spent several days at Croydon very agreeably. My Uncle's<sup>1</sup> family consists wholly of daughters, except one little boy, who seems very sprightly & clever. Yesterday & the day before I passed at Mr. Coore's seat, a few miles from town. Mrs. Lechmere happened to be there, she is in very good health, & is not at all altered from her appearance when in Boston. Mrs. Coore retains all her sprightliness & good humour, & is here thought quite handsome. Mr. Coore is a genteel, agreeable man, in exceeding good business, has four very fine children & appears very happy; he gives but little encouragement in the affair of Gen. Howe. But of all

<sup>1</sup> Dr. East Apthorp's.

these subjects I shall write more fully by Lyde. Mr. & Mrs. Atkinson & family and Mr. C. Storer will embark for New York, in their way to Boston in the course of a month, by them I shall send long accounts of myself & inform you how I mean to proceed; at present I am undetermined whether to go upon the continent this winter, or tarry here till the spring. (I have received your letters by Capt. Coffin, & by a ship from Rhode Island, & in the mercantile phrase, *I note the contents*; they gave me great pleasure as they informed [me] of your health & that of my dear Mamma; pray let the little girls know I have not forgot them, & as a proof of it I shall, some time hence, send each of them a *letter*, & shall certainly expect one in return.) Let George know that my constant engagements prevent my writing to him by this conveyance, but that I purpose doing it very soon. I fear Mr. Barrel has met with a great loss in Mr. Soderstrom of Gottenburgh, as I am informed he has stopped payment. I have forwarded to Gottenburgh the bill drawn by Mr. Barrel, but I fear there is no prospect of its being accepted. Please to make my best respects to Mr. Barrell, and inform him of these circumstances; with the proceeds of the bill I was to purchase some articles to send out this fall. If it should be protested I will take care that the articles shall be purchased by some other means rather than disappoint him.

I wish to be remembered to all my friends, in particular [Mr. & Mrs.] Cooper & my cousin, Mr. Storer, Mr. Freeman (both of the name) and especially [Mr. &] Mrs. Deblois. I hope my Mamma's health is at least as good as when I left her & assure her that I shall return with pleasure to my native country. Respects to my Grandmamma.

I am with affectionate regards

Your dutiful Son.

We are momentarily expecting the arrival of Callahan. I hope the Colonnade goes on with spirit.

This last reference is unexplained. It cannot have been Colonnade Row, as that was built much later, in 1810-11.

TO DR. THOMAS BULFINCH.

LONDON, December 12<sup>th</sup>, 1785.

DEAR SIR, — Your letter by Capt. Cushing found me still here, where I had been waiting in anxious expectation for his arrival ; a report which prevailed that he had sailed from Boston much earlier than he actually did, had made us rather apprehensive for his safety. I should have been in France before this, had not I expected some papers by Cushing to instruct me respecting your matters. The demand on government is exactly in the same situation as when I arrived. Col. Norton has done nothing, he thinks the officers of the Treasury, &c. are very civil to him and much in his interest, but their civility should not be esteemed a real inclination to serve him. It arises wholly from habit, and is the court manner of silencing the importunate. I do not know but the best thing you could do, would be to put the affair altogether into the hands of Mr. Coore ; he will be as likely to succeed as any one. I believe you must not expect to recover the whole sum demanded, but if he can compound for part it will be better than to lose the whole. I fear your plan of making a demand through Mr. Adams will not be attended with any good consequences. The government here is not so well disposed to listen to the demands of Congress. Mr. Adams cannot engage them to form a treaty, though they behave to him with the utmost civility and politeness. I think if it is made a national matter the British government will expect some

compensation to the Loyalists for their estates, debts, &c. before they pay for any losses sustained from their army. I was in hopes I should receive some further documents respecting the Church plate, and also Mr. B——'s debt. The Doctor has been allowed by government a sum fully equivalent to his house in Boston, so that he can now have no plausible reason for detaining the plate, but as he still means to keep it, I should be glad to be furnished with such papers as would enable me to compel a return of it. If Mr. B—— is indebted to you a hint that you expect him to pay would not be amiss; he is in very good circumstances and can very well afford it; an account properly attested and vouch'd would soon oblige him to produce the money.

This week I mean to set off for Paris. This circumstance need not prevent your writing by every conveyance, for the posts are so regular here that my being in France will make a difference of only a very few days; but I must mention that you must not be surprized if a ship from London should reach you without any letters from me, for as I shall be on the Continent for 3 or 4 months, it will be hardly possible for me to know of every opportunity of writing, but you may rely upon it, I shall do all in my power to be a regular Correspondent.

The Ship *Ceres* is unfortunately cast away on the French coast. Mr. Barrett saved your letter from the wreck and forwarded it to me. I received it in a tatter'd condition, but it was quite legible, and therefore, as you may suppose, gave me pleasure.

The pillars of the Collonade are, no doubt, still in an horizontal position. I hope they have been bored to secure them from splitting; had not you a very difficult piece of work to get them into Clement's shop? I suppose they

must be very heavy. I have seen Capt. Cushing, who informs me the Bridge<sup>1</sup> is in great forwardness. I hope it will stand till I return, as I should like much to see it, but I am not sure whether I would venture to pass over it.

If you wish to know how I spend my time &c. &c. I must beg leave to refer you to my letter to my Mamma and am

Dear Sir

Your dutiful son.

The allusion at the end of the following letter is to Miss Apthorp, the dark-eyed young cousin who afterwards became his wife :—

TO MR. GEORGE STORER.

MARSEILLES, May 2<sup>d</sup>, 1786.

DEAR GEORGE, — Notwithstanding I have met with the greatest instances of politeness and civility in this country, still I feel a want of a friend and companion to whom I can impart all my thoughts. At L'Orient I met with a young gentleman of Baltimore, we formed an acquaintance and travelled together from L'Orient to Bordeaux. This was a journey of about 300 miles and a very pleasant one ; from Bordeaux he went to Paris and I continued my course the opposite way. I am now 500 miles from Bordeaux and have not met with an opportunity of speaking English three

<sup>1</sup> This was the Charles River Bridge, from the old ferry landing to Charlestown, the first bridge constructed from the peninsula to the mainland. "The first pier was laid on the 14th June, 1785, and the bridge thrown open for travel in little more than a year. This was considered at the time the greatest enterprise ever undertaken in America, and its successful completion was celebrated by a public procession, consisting of both branches of the Legislature, the proprietors and artisans of the bridge, military and civic societies. Salutes were fired from the Castle, Copp's and Breed's Hill."

times during the whole journey. I am sensible this will be of advantage to me in learning French, but at present it is very fatiguing. I have run over a vast tract of country, have seen a variety of towns and people; you must not expect a particular account of my travels till we meet, when I shall inform you of many things which it would be tedious to recite here, and perhaps not prudent to commit to paper. A young traveller in this country should be on his guard against sharpers who push themselves into his acquaintance, profess a great regard and only watch an opportunity of cheating him. I have been so fortunate as to keep clear of them hitherto; I have had letters from one city to another which have secured to me an honest acquaintance at least, and have been particularly happy in meeting accidentally with some young person who has served as a guide in every city where I have made any halt. If a traveller can meet with a genteel, polite conductor of this sort, it is a very pleasing circumstance for him. . . .

It is now 3 months since I have received any letters from Boston. I hope it is not owing to your forgetting me, but that the letters are waiting for me either at London or Paris. If at my arrival in those cities I don't find some very large packets from you — woe betide you! The Ship *Leda* arrived at L'Orient while I was there; the Captain informed me that Boston remained nearly in the same place as when I left it, and that matters in general went on in the old way. If we may judge by the numbers of marriages, you are in a flourishing situation. I am only afraid you will marry off all the fine girls and that there will not be one left for me. I shall be looking out pretty soon after my return, and don't know whether you had not better engage me the refusal of half a dozen, for if you go on so rapidly as you have begun, I shall be compelled to take up with



some little French hussy. . . . You may expect me in the fall, I think I shall be fully satisfied with Europe by that time. I hope the guns of the castle will be ready to give a salute when I appear, and, what I shall esteem a greater pleasure, that your honor will be upon the wharf to receive me. Adieu, perhaps you think this letter short, but upon my word I am of a very different opinion, considering that the number of my correspondents has increased, and that I have a long letter to write to London, as well as another to Boston. In very great haste your friend, &c.

CHARLES BULFINCH.

I just recollect that you mentioned something to me of your part at the ensuing Commencement. All you have to do is to present 3 questions, out of which the President will choose one for publication. I have not thought much about the matter, but if the following arrive in time to be of service to you I shall be very glad. But I much question whether that will be the case; as it seems to me that the 20<sup>th</sup> of June is the time appointed for giving them in.

Whether, in a rising state, the utmost encouragement should not be given to foreign settlers? Affirmat.

Whether excessive duties on commerce enrich a government? No.

Whether theatrical exhibitions corrupt the manners of a people? Yes.

Whether Agriculture and Manufactures should not be encouraged by bounties? Yes.

I would translate the above into Latin for you, but upon my word I have such a jumble of French and English now in my head that it is absolutely out of my power. You and Josh must lay your noddles together, and I don't doubt you will make excellent Ciceronian Latin. — Upon second

thoughts it will not do for you to give in the 3<sup>d</sup>, for you, not being acquainted with plays, cannot know the reasons for and against it. On this account I have added a fourth question.

I wish you a happy commencement. You must dance either with Miss Williams or Miss A—t—p. If with the latter squeeze her hand for me. If with the former do it for yourself. Adieu.

May 20<sup>th</sup>. No matter where, — *but not at Marseilles*.

TO MRS. THOMAS BULFINCH.

MARSEILLES, May 10<sup>th</sup>, 1786.

MY DEAR MAMMA, — Since my last from L'Orient, I have been in constant motion towards this place, have run over a large tract, and seen great variety of objects; I have passed through all that part of France known to us in a commercial view, have seen their manufactures, and commenced some acquaintances which may perhaps be of advantage in future. From L'Orient I proceeded to Nantes, one of the most mercantile towns of y<sup>e</sup> kingdom, and passed two days in viewing its curiosities, &c. Among these you will conclude the public buildings were not neglected. There are a few there worth notice, and by their situation produce a good effect. Every town in France has one or more public walks, shaded with trees and kept in constant repair; these walks are usually surrounded by y<sup>e</sup> public buildings of y<sup>e</sup> place, which are an additional beauty at the same time that they serve as a shelter from the wind; I own myself much pleased with this mode of public walks, they contribute to the health of the people, and by bringing together at certain hours persons of all classes, they give that general polish so observable here. I met with Mr. Burril Carnes at Nantes, he is established there in y<sup>e</sup> commerce; he received

me very cordially, and was very polite in showing me the curiosities of the city. I passed through many towns in my route to Bordeaux, but stopt only a few hours in the most remarkable. At Bordeaux I stayed a week ; it is a large commercial city, and in some parts very elegant. The theatre is the most superb in France — it is a noble structure of y<sup>e</sup> Corinthian order, and cost only £130,000 Sterling. I passed on from Bordeaux to Toulouse with almost as much rapidity as I now make the journey on paper, and embarked on y<sup>e</sup> grand canal of Languedoc — the navigation here is rather tedious, the boat is drawn by horses, which seldom go faster than a common walk ; but my view in passing the canal was, to have an idea of that great work ; it is near an hundred miles in length, is 40 feet wide, and throughout has about 8 feet depth of water. It joins the Mediterranean Sea to y<sup>e</sup> Garonne, and by this means to y<sup>e</sup> Ocean ; it passes through vallies, over hills, across rivers, and under an arch formed through a mountain the length of 900 feet ; it is of the utmost advantage to y<sup>e</sup> Southern provinces of France, as it gives them an opportunity of carrying their products to market with very little expence or trouble. The canal ends at Narbonne, a town famous in days of yore, but as it has passed its meridian and seen its best days, I made no tarry there, but pushed on for Montpellier. This place is better known to you by name than any other town in this part of France. Its being long celebrated for the excellence of its climate has made it the resort of invalids, particularly the English. The town is situated on the top of an hill in the centre of a very extensive and beautiful valley. It contains many good houses, but it is almost impossible to have a peep at them, on account of the narrowness of the streets. They are built in this confined manner, with a view of keeping off the sun, for as the houses are

very high, his rays can never reach the ground except for a few minutes at noon, and I was informed by an inhabitant that in the hottest season they enjoy a fine current of air. This confined manner of building may have its advantages, but I am sure that of being beautiful is by no means one of the most obvious. To enjoy the beauties of the situation, you must go without the walls, where they have formed a very beautiful square, ornamented on one side by a magnificent fountain, on another with a triumphal arch, and the center is occupied by a noble equestrian statue of Louis XIV. on a white marble pedestal. The prospect from this place is as beautiful as the imagination can conceive, the view is bounded on one side by the town, on another by the Alps at a great distance, on another by the Pyrenean Mountains, and the fourth presents an extensive view of the Mediterranean. The summits of these mountains, always covered with snow, afford a striking contrast to the valley beneath, which is one continued carpet of y<sup>e</sup> most lively verdure, and presents to y<sup>e</sup> eye extensive fields of grain intermixed with numberless Olive and Mulberry trees. It is a situation which seems formed to give instant relief to an invalid, and I wished, at the moment of enjoying the view, that my dear Mamma, who has so great a relish for the beauties of nature, could partake the pleasure with me. Nimes is a one day's ride from Montpellier. This city was formerly the capital of a Roman colony. Many ancient remains announce the grandeur of its former masters. The present inhabitants show with exultation the remains of a very extensive Roman amphitheatre, and several temples; one of which is entire, and is esteemed a perfect model of Corinthian architecture. In this city I was present at a scene unusual in this age. Above two thirds of the inhabitants of this city are of the Reformed Church of Geneva.

They are tolerated here and allowed the free exercise of their mode of worship, but are not suffered to build any church. Their place of meeting is in a deep valley in the suburbs, the preacher is placed below in the centre, and the congregation is seated around him on rough stone seats, which rise gradually one above the other. There were several thousands present who afforded a very striking spectacle. Great part of their worship consisted in singing, and was conducted with the utmost order and regularity. One may here observe the effects of opposition. The Catholics, who in all the other towns of France seem to have almost forgot all religion, are here exceedingly attentive to their ceremonies; and the Protestants assemble in their valley with a sort of enthusiastick fervour which I fancy would soon cool down if they had churches to themselves. From Nimes to this place is another ride of two days. This is a country totally different from any I have hitherto been accustomed to, Vines, Olive and Mulberry trees appear in great abundance, mixed with Lemon, Orange and fig trees; by this you may judge of the heat of y<sup>e</sup> climate; it is indeed so violent that I shall soon hurry back further north into a more temperate region.

The people of France and their manners please me exceedingly, a constant politeness gives a charm to their society, and I have found in several instances that this politeness is not merely professional. I have everywhere met with friends, who by letters and by all means in their power have taken pains to render my visit among them pleasing. I have rambled far, but I thought it best to gratify my curiosity now to the full, and leave no cause of regret at an unfinished tour, after my return. I expect to see you in the fall, and can assure you that, after all the variety of objects I have seen, Boston still retains beauties and attrac-

tions sufficient to make me chuse it as an abode [superior] to every other place. . . . My dear Papa must excuse my not writing to him separately ; I consider this as addressed equally to both my Parents, and hope they want nothing to convince them of the constant affection and regards of their dutiful Son.

I hope you never forget to remember me particularly to my Grandmamma, Mrs. Cooper, Mr. and Mrs. Norton, Mrs. DeBlois and family, Mr. Barrell and Messrs. Freeman, with all my other friends. — As for the little girls, they know I am their friend and humb<sup>l</sup>e Servant, &c. &c. &c.

The next letter we have is written from London in August, to his mother, and throws light by its opening confession on some passages that have preceded. “My last letter, my dear Madam, was dated from Marseilles, tho’ at the time of writing it I was at Leghorn in Italy. I did not mean that my friends in Boston should have known that my roving inclinations had carried me so far, till I had an opportunity of informing them of it in person, but as some one from this place has given you the hint, — the cat is out of the bag, — and all I have now to do is to explain my motives for so long a circuit.”

The writer then proceeds to say that, his travels in France having led him finally to the borders of the Mediterranean, he had an opportunity for observing the constant intercourse kept up with Italian ports, and his imagination had warmed at the thought of extending his journey thither. On inquiry he learned, what he was no doubt eager to believe, that the expense would be less than was usually thought, and his knowledge of the French language would probably carry him everywhere. He accordingly embarked, and visited Rome and the greater part of Italy, without

meeting with one unfortunate accident or one day of ill-health. "It is needless for me to say," he observes, "that the satisfaction I have received in this tour has amply compensated for any fatigue I have undergone in making it. . . . It would be in vain to attempt to give here a particular account of such a country; the subject is too copious & must be left till we meet in y<sup>e</sup> winter."<sup>1</sup>

A postscript adds: "I find everybody is either married or marrying with you; it will be difficult on my return to find one left single."

TO MRS. THOMAS BULFINCH.

LONDON, September 17<sup>th</sup>, 1786.

You will think, my dear Mamma, that I have become entirely regardless of my promises, when I suffer another ship to sail from this port without sending you some of the articles you have ordered out, but I assure you I am not wholly without plausible excuses.

All my friends have left London for the season, Mr. Coore's family is at Hampstead on one side, and Mr. Wheelwright's at Croydon on the other; my time has been spent in visiting these friends, and in seeing some celebrated places in the neighborhood of London. Matters are however in a fair train, and I will venture to assure you that you shall receive all the articles by Cushing; even the picture shall not be omitted. I should have sent it by this opportunity, but the colours are not sufficiently dried for packing. It is esteemed a good likeness; I think it a very dull, unmeaning face; but we must not blame the painter for that, as it was not his duty to create, but to copy. It is the work of

<sup>1</sup> I have heard my father say that my grandfather was so much affected by the first sight of St. Peter's that he could not restrain his tears.





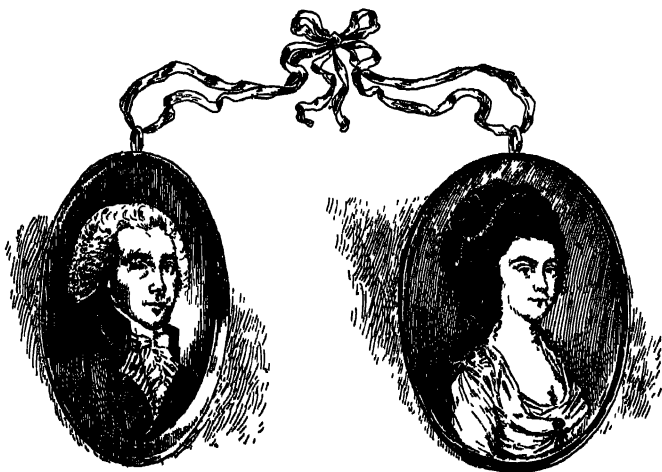






Mr. Brown ; you will find it very rough, but that is the modish style of painting, introduced by Sir Joshua Reynolds. Mr. Copeley indeed paints in another manner, his pictures are finished to the utmost nicety, but then—they are *very dear*. You will think it odd that I should say so much of a picture which you are not to receive very soon ; but I am still in hopes that the ship will be detained a day or two longer, and then I shall if possible forward it. Mr. Adams returned from Holland a few days since ; he has the papers respecting the government affair, and I shall know his opinion of it in a day or two. My father may depend on my paying attention to his order, all the articles he has written for shall be sent by Cushing, and the lasses shall then find that I have not forgotten them. With love to them and regards to all friends I am your dutiful and affectionate son.





### CHAPTER III

BOSTON AFTER THE REVOLUTION. — MARRIAGE

1787 — 1789

My bride,  
My wife, my life. O we will walk this world,  
Yoked in all exercise of noble end,  
And so through those dark gates across the wild  
That no man knows.

TENNYSON

“ON my return to Boston, I was warmly received by friends, and passed a season of leisure, pursuing no business, but giving gratuitous advice in Architecture, and looking forward to an establishment in life.”

The portrait alluded to in the London letter is still in the family, and, with a miniature taken by Malbone, gives us an idea of the appearance of Charles Bulfinch at this time. The portrait represents a young man with powdered hair, a slender, oval face, smooth and boyish, with a bright color, and dark hazel eyes. The full lips are slightly

parted, a characteristic feature of his face. The dark eyebrows are strongly marked. The coat is of brown velvet, faced with yellow, and shows a white ruffled shirt bosom. A miniature painted by Malbone, not far from the same time, is similar in dress and general appearance. Mr. Bulfinch was of medium height, with a slender and very upright figure. His hair was black, or dark brown. He speaks of his own disposition as naturally grave; and it is said that, although he enjoyed conversation and general society, he was, to a remarkable degree, independent of company and satisfied to be alone. Those now living who can remember him in old age recall his manner as simple, unassuming, and quiet, but say that he possessed an even and generally cheerful temper, with a quiet humor, occasionally seen in his letters, and that he always showed a quick appreciation of a good story or a witty remark.

He was now, in 1787, twenty-four years old. The recent years had not been favorable to the growth or progress of his native town, and in some respects things had gone backward rather than forward. It may be well to glance at some of its leading features, as historians describe them, at the time of his return. The population in 1783 was but 12,000, although in 1791 it rose again to 18,000, with 2,376 houses, and from that time, steadily increased. The war and the occupation by the British had left their destructive marks. The works on Fort Hill had been badly damaged. Some of the finest trees on the Common were cut down by the soldiers on the morning before the evacuation; the wooden fence was gone, — though another one, also of wood, was soon to take its place, — and the grassy surface, where cows had quietly pastured, bore, for long after, the traces of ditches and cellars that the troops had dug.

There were also other changes. The royal governors were gone, and so were the court balls of Lord Howe, never to return; but the stately and beautiful Province House still stood, opposite the head of Milk Street, on what was then Marlborough Street and is now Washington, with its flights of steps, its lawns, its fine oak-trees, gateway, and porter's lodges, and its famous Indian, armed with bow and arrow, crowning the lofty cupola. Its deserted rooms were occupied now by the treasurer and other officers of the Commonwealth.

Some half dozen of the chief buildings of the town have come down to us: the Old State House, of illustrious memory, Faneuil Hall, — much smaller than it is now, — King's Chapel, and the Old North and South churches. Christ Church, with its lofty spire, towered above the narrow streets of the North End, in whose ancient and sometimes dilapidated dwellings are still left the remains of substantial masonry and delicate carvings of the colonial time. The Old Corner Bookstore is another relic of that day.

The old hostelrys that played such a prominent part in Revolutionary times could still be seen. There were the Green Dragon; the Orange Tree Inn, with its fine well of water; the Bunch of Grapes, that entertained Washington and Lafayette; the Sun Tavern, and the venerable inn of Salutation Alley.

In the place of Park Street with its church, there still stood the ancient granary, with the other town buildings, the Almshouse, Bridewell, and public Pound, above it on the hillside. The old building of Trinity Church, of wood, on Summer Street, with neither tower nor steeple, could yet show a fine interior, so beautiful were its columns and ornamentation. Brattle Street Church bore a relic of the siege in its "iron breastpin."

Near the head of School Street stood the building of the Latin School; and on the east side of Hamilton Place arose the large "Manufactory House" of colonial days, representing on its wall a woman's figure with distaff in hand, as an emblem of industry.

The "three hills" were still standing, untouched by the leveller's spade. Copp's Hill had, as now, its field of the dead, one of the earliest burying grounds on the peninsula. Fort Hill, from which Washington had removed the heavy guns, was beautiful with elm-trees and the mansions of wealthy townspeople; and above them all rose "the great hill with its beacon," — the wooden mast that, occasionally replaced, had been a prominent feature of the town from the earliest times.

The filling up of the large Mill Pond, northwest of the town, had not then begun. The Mill Creek furnished a supply of water for the tide-mills, and was also, a little later, as an extension of the "Middlesex Canal," to permit the passage of boats and sloops from Boston Harbor as far as Chelmsford, on the Merrimac, thirty miles away. In much later years, boys skated up this canal to Lowell. On the bed of it, in the city, Blackstone Street is now built.

The old mill bridge, then standing over Hanover Street, was afterwards replaced by an arch of stone, and a draw-bridge was used at the crossing of the creek with North Street.

South Boston, or Dorchester Neck, — not then annexed, — had as late as 1804 only ten families in an area of 570 acres; and East Boston, otherwise Noddle's Island, was unused except for farming purposes. Milk was brought over from there to the town in boats.

State Street was without a sidewalk, the pavement reaching clear across, and most of the other streets were doubt-



less in the same condition. A few public carriages may have been seen at this time, for we have record of one which stood in 1790 near the head of State Street, a small post-chaise, drawn by two gray horses. Some street lamps, at private expense or by special subscription, were in use, but it was not until 1792, when Charles Bulfinch himself was connected with municipal affairs, that the town undertook the task in an experimental way, and announced that "the gentlemen selectmen propose to light the town early in January."

The "Roxbury Neck" to the mainland, on the south, was then indeed a neck or narrow roadway between the Charles River on the west and the waters of the harbor, and in a high wind the spray was dashed across the road from one to the other.

On the north, the new bridge to Charlestown was a great public improvement. There was no other bridge until, in 1793, the West Boston one to Cambridge was opened.

In various places the windmills still remained, and how country-like were some parts of the town, covered now with crowded buildings, may be gathered from a description, given by an old Bostonian, of the western slope of Beacon Hill, where early in the present century a well furnished an abundant supply of very fine water in the fields where Louisburg Square is now situated, while around it and all the way down the hill grew rough grass and bushes.

Marsh land, overflowed at high tide, formed the boundary of the river here and at the western edge of the Common, where Charles Street was not yet in existence, and nearly all the space now covered by the Public Garden was somewhat later — after 1794 — occupied by ropewalks, which ran from Eliot Street three fourths of the distance to Beacon.

Now were seen in the town those oystermen of whom we read, going their evening rounds, with sacks upon their backs like saddle-bags, and opening at the doors their fresh bivalves, which are said to have been more delicious than any known in these degenerate days.

As no coal was used in the town until 1820 or after, all were at this time dependent upon wood for fuel, and huge quantities were piled upon the wharves. We are told that, in early fall, wood-sawyers could be seen in every street, in front of the houses, sawing wood, which was afterwards piled with the utmost neatness in the yards or sheds.

In a water-color drawing of the Bulfinch house, in Bowdoin Square, made by the English artist Vautin a generation or more later than this date, one of these wood-sawyers is to be seen at work.

The mansion of Mr. Ebenezer Storer, the treasurer of Harvard College and the father of George, was on Sudbury Street, and is described by Miss Quincy, among other Boston homes. It was a large, three-storied house, with gardens and noble trees. An old English elm of uncommon height and circumference stood in front of it, and behind was an equally imposing sycamore. We are familiar with descriptions of many of these "stately homes set deep in gardens," the Hancock, the Faneuil, and the Phillips houses, and others not less elegant.

Those who remember a time when the treasures of Boston gardens were still left dwell especially upon the delightful freshness of the summer breeze, as, coming from the east over the harbor, it caught up and mingled with its saltness the spicy breath of the roses, honeysuckles, and borders of box.

This, then, gives us some idea of what Boston was like at the close of the Revolution, primitive enough in many

ways, "a little town of detached houses," but yet, with its group of dignified buildings, the centre of honorable traditions, and its noble situation inviting growth and activity in all directions.

The town and the State alike were seriously burdened and crippled by the war, but the assumption of state debts by the federal government relieved some of the heaviest of these burdens, and before long a new tide of life began to make itself felt, inclining the people to listen to plans of enterprise both at home and abroad.

Immediately after his return Charles Bulfinch became interested, in connection with his father, in a project which should find some mention here, from the historical value attaching to its results, although the pecuniary returns were comparatively insignificant. It was at Dr. Thomas Bulfinch's mansion and by his fireside that those plans were discussed, among a little circle of friends, which resulted in the purchase and outfit of the ship *Columbia*, whose voyages, during the next five or six years, have become matter of history, from her being the first American vessel to carry the stars and stripes around the world, and from her discoveries on the Northwest coast, claiming for the United States that region now represented by the States of Oregon, Washington, and Idaho. The publication of Captain Cook's journal had attracted attention to the great advantages open to the fur trade in the Northwest, valuable skins being procured by the Russians from the Indians in exchange for trifling commodities, and sold at a great price to the Chinese. Arrangements appear to have been made in the summer of 1787 for sending out an expedition from Boston; and as the originator of the scheme was Mr. Joseph Barrell, well qualified by his experience and ability for taking the lead in such matters, his friends the Bulfinches,

father and son, naturally gave it their coöperation. In company with a few others interested, Samuel Brown, John Derby of Salem, Captain Crowell Hatch, and John Marden Pintard of New York, the sum of \$50,000 was raised for the enterprise; and on September 30, 1787, the *Columbia*, with her consort the *Washington*, left Boston harbor, well equipped for her long voyage around Cape Horn, while a concourse of friends watched their departure and bade them godspeed.

At a meeting of the Bostonian Society on May 10, 1892, an interesting and valuable address was given by the Rev. Edward G. Porter on the subject of these vessels and their adventures, when many curious relics of the expedition were shown. The address was in substance the same with a paper prepared by Mr. Porter at the request of the Committee of the Centennial Observance at Astoria of the Discovery of the Columbia River, and was founded on material gathered with great care from private sources, and illustrated by original drawings made at the time on board the ships. This paper, with illustrations, may be found in the "*New England Magazine*" for June, 1892, and to it we are indebted for the details of the expedition.

The *Columbia* was a full-rigged ship, eighty-three feet long and of two hundred and twelve tons. She carried ten guns, and was commanded at first by Captain John Kendrick. Her consort, afterwards called the *Lady Washington*, was commanded by Captain Robert Gray, who, however, by an exchange of commanders, soon after took charge of the *Columbia*. No pains nor expense were spared in the outfit. Hardware and tools were carried to be used in trading for furs, and quantities of trinkets to please the fancy of the Indians, — buttons, toys, necklaces, snuff-boxes, looking-glasses, etc.

The ships were absent, on their first voyage, for three years, and when on August 10, 1790, the *Columbia* sailed alone into the home harbor, having parted with Kendrick's vessel in the Pacific, the fact was announced by salvos of artillery and cheers from crowds of citizens. The perils of the voyage had been great. Lingered too long before attempting the passage of the Cape, they had encountered heavy gales and had finally become separated, only meeting five months later in Nootka Sound. They had suffered losses from theft by the natives, but had met with signal kindness on the part of the Spaniards. Making large purchases of sea-otter skins (which they paid for in chisels, six or ten being the price of a good one), the *Columbia*, now under Captain Gray, procured provisions at the Sandwich Islands, and then set sail for China to dispose of the furs and bring home a cargo of tea. The financial profit was but small, but the voyage was considered a great achievement. A procession of citizens escorted the officers and owners of the vessel up State Street, Captain Gray walking arm in arm with a young Hawaiian chief in brilliant array, who had accompanied them home and was the first of his race ever seen in Boston. Governor Hancock gave a dinner in honor of the returned voyagers, and a second expedition was soon proposed.

The *Columbia* set sail September 28, 1790, on her memorable second voyage, which was made tragic by the cruel massacre of three of her men the following year by savages. We quote from Mr. Porter's narrative an account of the discovery which made her name so famous, and rendered so great a service to the United States : —

"Gray soon after took his ship on a cruise which was destined to be the most important of all, — one that will be remembered as long as the United States exist.

“On the 29th of April, 1792, he fell in with Vancouver, who had been sent out from England with three vessels of the Royal Navy as commissioner to execute the provisions of the Nootka Treaty and to explore the coast. Vancouver said he had made no discoveries as yet, and inquired if Gray had made any. The Yankee captain replied that he had; that in latitude  $46^{\circ} 10'$  he had recently been off the mouth of a river which for nine days he tried to enter, but the outset was so strong as to prevent. He was going to try it again, however. Vancouver said this must have been the opening passed by him two days before, which he thought might be ‘a small river,’ inaccessible on account of the breakers extending across it, the land behind not indicating it to be of any great extent. ‘Not considering this opening worthy of more attention,’ wrote Vancouver in his journal, ‘I continued our pursuit to the northwest.’ What a turn in the tide of events was that! Had the British navigator really seen the river, it would certainly have had another name and another history.

“Gray continued his ‘pursuit’ to the southeast, whither the star of his destiny was directing him. On the 7th of May he saw an entrance in latitude  $46^{\circ} 58'$  ‘which had a very good appearance of a harbor,’ and observing from the masthead a passage between the sandbars, he bore away and ran in. This he called Bulfinch Harbor, though it was very soon after called, as a deserved compliment to him, Gray’s Harbor, — the name which it still bears. Here he was attacked by the natives, and obliged in self-defense to fire upon them with serious results. Davidson’s drawing gives a weird view of the scene.

“On the evening of May 10, Gray resumed his course to the south, and at daybreak on the 11th he saw ‘the entrance of his desired port’ a long way off. As he drew near,

about eight o'clock, he bore away with all sails set and ran in between the breakers. To his great delight he found himself in a large river of fresh water, up which he steered ten miles. There were Indian villages at intervals along the banks, and many canoes came out to inspect the strange visitor.

"The ship came to anchor at one o'clock in ten fathoms of water, half a mile from the northern shore, and two miles and a half from the southern, the river being three or four miles wide all the way along. Here they remained three days, busily trading and taking in water.

"On the 14th he stood up the river some fifteen miles farther, 'and doubted not it was navigable upwards of a hundred.' He found the channel on that side, however, so very narrow and crooked that the ship grounded on the sandy bottom, but they backed off without difficulty. The jolly-boat was sent out to sound the channel, but, finding it still shallow, Gray decided to return, and on the 15th he dropped down with the tide, going ashore with his clerk 'to take a short view of the country.'

"On the 16th he anchored off the village of Chenook, whose population turned out in great numbers. The next day the ship was painted and all hands were busily at work. On the 19th, they landed near the mouth of the river, and formally named it, after the ship, the COLUMBIA, raising the American flag and planting coins under a large pine tree, thus taking possession in the name of the United States. The conspicuous headland was named Cape Hancock, and the low sandspit opposite, Point Adams. . . . At last, after all her wanderings, the good ship reached Boston, July 29, 1793, and received another hearty welcome. Although the expectations of the owners were not realized, one of them wrote, 'She has made a saving voyage and some

profit.' But in the popular mind the discovery of the great river was sufficient 'profit' for any vessel, and this alone will immortalize the owners as well as the ship and her captain, far more, indeed, than furs or teas or gold could have done."

One of the silver medals struck, for the owners and others, to commemorate this expedition, is preserved by the Bulfinch family. Hundreds of the same in bronze or pewter were carried out by the vessels, to be distributed along their course, and some of these have since been discovered on their track.

Many names were given at the time by the ship's officers to points on the coast, such as Pintard Sound, Hatch's Island, Barrell's Inlet, and Bulfinch Sound, which have since, in many instances, been changed, making it difficult now to identify the places.

On November 20, 1788, Charles Bulfinch was married to Hannah Apthorp, the eldest of the orphan grandchildren of the royalist, Stephen Greenleaf, the last high sheriff of the county of Suffolk under the British government. The bride was also an own cousin of the groom, for her father, John Apthorp, earlier mentioned in this narrative, was one of Madam Bulfinch's brothers. He had formed an early marriage in England, where he was connected with the London house of Tomlinson & Trecothick, but on the death of his wife had left their two little girls in the care of her relatives and returned himself to America, disposing of his concern in the commercial house for a considerable sum of money. Here he very soon married Hannah, a daughter of Sheriff Greenleaf, and three children were born of this union, two girls and a boy.

Mr. Apthorp's health was not strong, and, as a Southern climate was recommended by his physicians, he sailed with



his wife for Charleston, S. C., on board a vessel which, though spoken when a few days out, was never afterwards heard from. It was late in the autumn, a severe snowstorm followed them, and it was supposed that the ship was lost at sea with all on board. The little ones, left thus early without father or mother, found a loving home with their grandfather Greenleaf, who attended most faithfully to their interest and education. One of Hannah Bulfinch's sons wrote many years later: "You know the place where their childhood was spent, the fine old house, standing back from the street, on about the spot where Temple Place now is, the whole space to the corner of West Street being enclosed in the garden attached to the house (afterwards known as Washington Gardens). I remember well the low brick wall that enclosed it, and the fine old trees that overhung the street, and belt of shrubbery that bordered the wall."

Sheriff Greenleaf was in the possession of a handsome fortune, and, from the father's property accumulating through a long minority, there was a prospect of abundant affluence to each of the children. A fine portrait of John Apthorp, painted in Italy by Angelica Kaufmann, is owned by the Apthorp descendants, and the orphans are said to have been a handsome trio, while their condition attached them in no common degree to each other. Through all the reverses which after years brought upon the two sisters, their brother's care and affectionate generosity always followed them. Hannah, the elder, born in 1768, of a bright and vivacious temperament, was about twenty years old at the time of her marriage with her cousin Charles. Her miniature shows a delicate face, with dark hair entwined with pearls. The natures of the two seemed peculiarly fitted for each other. He writes himself: "We were

cousins, and had been in some degree acquainted from early life; the connection was esteemed a happy one and began under the most favorable circumstances. My disposition was sedate, hers cheerful and animated; a respectable property on both sides promised us the enjoyment of all the comforts and rational pleasures of life, and these expectations were fully realized in the blessings of a peaceful home, with mutual affection and the enjoyment of the best society."

Happily for her children and friends, Hannah Bulfinch possessed, throughout her life, a gift for easy and graceful literary expression, and her ready pen indited many occasional verses that must often have brightened the family circle. The exceeding regard and affection of her sons led them to collect and treasure all of their mother's writings that were accessible, and, although they are chiefly of interest to her descendants, we find in them some valuable help in tracing her husband's career, as well as in forming an idea of the family life. In describing her own early years, she writes: "These revered Grandparents who had the care of our childhood and youth, were truly high principled and affectionate. Pious and tender, they felt for us the sincerest compassion and passed their lives in cherishing and training us up in the best manner, by private instruction and schools. Our Grandmother was taken from us when I was eleven years old. As I was the oldest child, I was the more sensible of this heavy loss, as she became very dear to me, and as my disposition was uncommonly lively I was in the more danger from my inconsiderate gaiety. This was, however, in some degree checked by my dear sister's calm and rational turn, and by our Grandfather's watchful attention. This I set down as one of the first and best of my blessings. I was also restrained by the austere manners of

an old lady, the sister of my Grandfather, who being a widow, lived in his family and was protected by his kindness. She was a singular character. Calvinistic divinity joined to a mind deeply embued by romance reading, gave an unbending gravity to her thoughts, words, and actions. My wild and childish ways offended her, and a distaste existed accordingly towards me, and a doting love of my sister, whom she could govern in everything but her generous love of me.”<sup>1</sup>

In the spring of 1789, following their marriage, the young couple, accompanied by their two sisters, Anna Bulfinch (who figures as Nancy in the letters) and Frances Apthorp, started on a tour through Connecticut to New York, and proceeded as far as Philadelphia, travelling in carriages or sleighs, as it was long before the days of railroads, and somewhat slowly on account of the rough weather of the spring. Arriving at Fairfield, Conn., they were delayed for some days by illness, but the trip seems to have been on the whole a most happy one, culminating in the ceremonies at the Inauguration of General Washington, in New York, on the 30th of April, 1789, immediately after which the party seem to have turned their faces homewards, since, among the letters written to their parents at this time, there are none remaining which describe the great event itself. George Storer, the dear and intimate friend of the family, who soon after became still more closely connected with it by his marriage to Anna, seems to have been one of the party, and no doubt added much to their enjoyment by his happy and lively temper. Charles Bulfinch writes of him, “a man whose cheerful and friendly disposition had engravated him to me from early

<sup>1</sup> A few valuable portraits are almost the only relics that remain of the Greenleaf household.

boyhood." The brother of the bride, young Apthorp, lately returned from pursuing his education in England, would appear to have joined them in New York.

A few letters remain, giving some account of the excursion.

The references to "the common" designate the Greenleaf homestead, which stood opposite the Common, on what is now Tremont Street, but was then known as Common Street.

FAIRFIELD, IN CONNECTICUT,  
Sunday Morn'g, March 1<sup>st</sup>, 1789

Our short billets, my dear Parents, from Worcester and Springfield were not intended as correct accounts of our proceedings; but were only a mention of such circumstances as our fatigue after a long day's ride would permit us to put to paper, and which your desire of hearing from us frequently induced us to send. We arrived here yesterday; and find ourselves in a remarkably convenient house, well accommodated and with neat, civil people; advantages which we have not been so happy as to meet with in all the places where we have stopped. We found upon our arrival here, that we should not be allowed to travel on Sunday; this is in some degree a disappointment; but I hope advantages will flow even from this, as it will be an agreeable refreshment to our young travellers, who have been pretty rapidly conveyed here. Some of my present leisure I mean to employ in mentioning further circumstances of our proceedings thus far. Our spirits were a little damped, as you may suppose, upon the first afternoon of our journey, when we saw a slight fall of snow, which we feared might end in a violent storm; but we soon grew cheerful again when seated around a large fire, in a comfortable room; with an ample provision of tea and toast before us. You are

informed of our getting as far as Springfield, and of our changing our Coach for a sley, at about 50 miles distance from Boston. The sley our driver procured was an open one; but by forming a superstructure of Blankets, upon some hoops which supported them, we made a very compact and comfortable vehicle. In this carriage we have proceeded much faster than we could have done in a coach even on the best roads. We think we have experienced two of the coldest days of this winter, in last Wednesday and Thursday. I suppose it must have been very cold with you, but our situation on some of the highest hills in this country rendered the air particularly sharp. We however kept the ladies tolerably warm by the help of blankets, cloaks and hot bricks. They would not be deprived of the view of the country by the cold, but kept the sunny side of the sley uncovered, which gave them an opportunity of viewing all that was worth seeing in this season, and I can assure you that, altho' covered with snow, the country afforded many views, some in the grand and others in the beautiful stile, which were very pleasing. Our young travellers were particularly delighted at find'g so many really handsome towns, where perhaps they had expected to have met with a wild waste, or at best a few farm houses. The towns of Worcester and Springfield in our state pleased them; and in Connecticut almost every place afforded some entertainment, particularly Hartford, New Haven, Wethersfield, and above all Middletown, by its beautiful view.

We passed very safely over those rivers of which we were so apprehensive; the cold had formed us bridges, as solid as the most firm bridges of Europe. We are now about 65 miles from New York, and I hope soon to arrive there without any accident, when the ladies purpose writing you fully. Nancy begs you will excuse her this time and will be a

good girl the next. Our love to Betsey and regards to all friends.

I am your affectionate and dutiful

CH<sup>s</sup> BULFINCH.

PHILADELPHIA, April 2<sup>d</sup>, 1789.

MY DEAR PARENTS, — I seize upon this only moment of leisure to write you by Mr. Cutler, and acquaint you with our more than polite reception here; our whole journey has been productive of pleasure, we can speak largely of the politeness of our friends in New York, — but must be particular in mentioning the friendly, hospitable treatment of many of the inhabitants of this place; Mrs. Powell, Mrs. Morris and Mrs. Bingham have done all in their power to render our stay perfectly agreeable.

I was in hopes that before this I could have informed you of our ladies having been at the Theatre, and their behaviour at the first theatrical entertainment, but from an unlucky concurrence of circumstances we have never yet seen a play — this is owing to a representation's having been postponed on one night when we had formed a party; and to constant engagements elsewhere, which we could not break thro', on every other evening. I hope, however, that to-night we shall see *Romeo and Juliet*, if we can possibly retire soon enough after dinner. The fashionable hours of dining at this place interfere much with any after engagement for the evening.

This city is not much altered since I was last here, except in its increase; the same plain stile of building is kept up, and the same quakerish neatness. One only great exception to this appears in the house of Mr. Bingham, which is in a stile which would be esteemed splendid even in the most luxurious parts of Europe. Elegance of construction;

white marble staircase, valuable paintings, the richest furniture and the utmost magnificence of decoration make it a palace, in my opinion far *too* rich for *any* man in this country. We are told that his mode of living is fully equal to this appearance of his house. Of this we shall be better able to judge in a few hours, as we are to dine there to-day.

We begin to talk of home, and anticipate the pleasure of meeting with our friends; we shall leave this city in a few days and proceed by Bethlehem to New York, where we are now morally certain of meeting with General Washington and after *seeing him* shall push on for Boston.

I mean to write a few lines to Mr. Greenleaf, by this conveyance, which must be my apology for not adding much to the above scrawl.

I am, with sincerest regards

Your dutiful Son.

NEW YORK, 19<sup>th</sup> April.

MY DEAR PARENTS — My last was dated from Philadelphia the day before we left that place; we came on at an easy rate towards this city, but made an excursion from the direct road to take a view of a famous fall of water about 18 miles out of our way. These falls of Passaack are a noble and an awful object and served to give all the variety to our journey that we could desire. We were obliged, much against our inclination, to give up the thought of visiting Bethlehem; the road from Philadelphia to that place is thro' an irregular, hilly country, and is bad at all seasons, but at this time in particular is so bad, that upon mature deliberation our whole party determined it would be best not to venture.

We arrived here the day before yesterday, have been peculiarly fortunate in our weather; it is now very pleasant,

and I trust will not grow too warm while we continue here. Among the pleasures my companions promised themselves in this journey, you know that the seeing a play was not reckoned among the least ; I have the pleasure to inform you that although their expectations were highly raised, they have been *more* than gratified. We attended three plays in Philadelphia, and have already seen two here ; and I suppose it will be thought *absolutely* necessary by our party to see every one that shall be performed during our stay ; indeed so charmed are they, that remarks upon the play and the different actors engross great part of our conversation. You must expect our ladies to form a party in Boston for establishing a Theatre there, and they are pretty sure of success, as they perceive by your papers that you are attending "Lectures on heads," &c. I hope Mr. Barrell will put his long-talked of plan of coming to New York in execution. I should be very glad to see him at a play ; for the greatest part of my entertainment has arisen from a strict attention to the novices, and perceiving their emotions. Notwithstanding these and other amusements we begin to wish to be at home, and shall hasten there with diligence as soon as we have seen General Washington. The sight of this great man is all that is wanting to make our pleasures complete ; he will certainly be here the latter end of this week, and will probably enter upon his office the Monday or Tuesday following ; great preparations are making to shew the public joy on his arrival ; elegant transparent paintings and fireworks are to be exhibited ; and everything will be done to induce Congress to make this city the place of their permanent residence. Indeed, if a readiness to lavish away money can influence that body, no place can have an equal claim with New York, but I should not be surprised if they were to overdo the matter, and by such great eagerness excite



the jealousy of other states ; they have already expended near 25,000 pounds and seem to be still going on. We received no letters from you by last night's post ; suppose you have written by Mr. Adams, who will be here to-morrow afternoon. We hope you do not blame us very loudly for overstaying our time, for you must reflect that the object we have in view is of such a sort as will perhaps never again appear during our lives. We expect not only to see General Washington, but to see *him* the favorite of this whole continent, the admiration of Europe—to see *him* publicly introduced to office and take an oath to preserve inviolate the constitution. This was one great motive for our coming, and we should ever regret losing this sight by any precipitate departure.

We are all well, and in good spirits, wish to be particularly remembered to our friends, Grandmamma, Mrs. Cooper, Mr. Freeman, Mr. Barrell, &c. &c. &c. As to domestic matters :

I suppose Peter is desirous of going ; if so would wish you, Sir, to pay him from the 20th of February, and if Mr. Foster's man is determined to leave him and there would be nothing ungentle in the matter, I shall be glad to engage him from the first of May. I have no doubt good Mrs. Inglis will be glad to see us ; we shall be no less pleased at meeting with her. Love to Betsey, she has been a good girl and a charming scribe to Mamma.

I must repeat that we desire to be remembered to all friends.

I am your most affectionate  
dutiful Son.

The matter of the picture shall be attended to.

NEW YORK, April 21<sup>st</sup>, 1789.MY DEAR PARENTS, —  
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. . . . .  
.

Mr. Adams arrived here yesterday, and was received most cordially by all ranks; I have not yet seen him; have called on him, but he was from home. General Washington will certainly be here the day after to-morrow. He will be conducted to his house as a private gentleman, and all parade and show will be postponed to the day on which he is inducted to office, when a general illumination, &c. is to take place. This stile of reception is resolved on by Congress, but the city in its corporate capacity and its individuals will receive him with congratulations, and we shall have a military parade and firing of cannon and I suppose abundance of noise to shew him their heart-felt satisfaction. . . .

Mr. John Apthorp, who left us at Philadelphia to proceed on to Baltimore, joined us to-day; he has completed his tour with great expedition. He has been as far as Mount Vernon, General Washington's seat — dined with him — saw as much of the Country as he wished, and is here with us ready to proceed to Boston. He is capering about, but ceases a little to desire his respects to you and beg Mr. Greenleaf may be acquainted with the above particulars.

We have found a very good miniature painter, Nancy is to give him her first sitting to-morrow — and I doubt not he will give a good and pleasing likeness. Hannah, Frances, Nancy, all desire regards and love to you particularly — next to their friends in the Common and then to all friends generally.

I do not know what you think, but *I* conceive myself to have a considerable share of merit in giving you such long letters — especially considering the inconvenience I encoun-

ter of writing in a room filled with chearful — and *rather* loquacious beings.

I am your affectionate and dutiful

CHARLES BULFINCH.

I find by the Boston papers that Mr. Barrell's India ship has arrived. I suppose this will prevent his coming this way. He ought to have been here at this time. My best compliments to him and family.

This is the last letter from the travellers, who must have found in General Washington's visit to Boston, the succeeding autumn, a great deal to renew their patriotic enthusiasm. The wedding journey was to be followed, a few years later, by the marriage of the two young ladies, Anna Bulfinch to George Storer, and Frances Apthorp to Charles Vaughan, "a descendant," so says the chronicle, "from a family of great cultivation and distinguished benevolence in England."

The town directory for the year 1789 contains the name of "Charles Bulfinch, gentleman, Marlborough Street;" so it is probable that his home was not far from the old neighborhood, and the other young people seem to have been settled near by. All of them entered upon their married life under the happiest auspices, amid the new and inspiring conditions of the young republic. Rich and well connected, high-principled, yet with their grave New England training softened by a cultivation of mind and sweetness of temper somewhat unusual, there was every reason to predict for them a happy future.



## CHAPTER IV

### EARLY PLANS AND DISAPPOINTMENTS

1789—1798

Whatever touches and ennobles us in the lives and in the voices of the past is a divine birth from human doubt and pain.

JAMES MARTINEAU.

ESTABLISHED now in a home of his own, with the library around him of which some volumes have come down to us, — his set of Shakespeare, his British classics, his works on architecture, — Charles Bulfinch turned his attention to those opportunities for improving and ornamenting his native town which readily suggested themselves to one of his tastes after visiting the cities of the Old World.

Architecture was not then recognized here as a profession. The Puritan temper and the exigencies of early New England life had not been favorable to the development of the artistic spirit; and for anything beyond the powers of the thorough and well-taught artisans of those days, our forefathers were indebted to artists from abroad, like Smibert, who designed Faneuil Hall, or Peter Harrison, the architect of King's Chapel.

The field was open to native talent, and Mr. Bulfinch's leisure and comparative wealth made it easy for him to follow his favorite tastes and promote the execution of his plans.

Notwithstanding his statement that his love of art had been disadvantageous to business habits, and had influenced his after life unfortunately, there seems no reason to suppose that his style of living, even at this time, was at all expensive. It certainly was extremely simple at a later date. As to his way of working, it is probable that one of the parlors was his only office, and a small table with a drawer containing his box of mathematical instruments, color-box, and a few rulers, his only outfit. As there is nothing known of his ever studying with a master the principles of his art, so nothing is remembered of his ever having pupils of his own. But very few of his designs remain, either of ground-plans or elevations, and they are slight in character. It is unlikely that his drawings were ever numerous, elaborate, or on a large scale.

The simple ways of living and working at that time would be nearly inconceivable to the present generation. Personal supervision of the progress of a work, the eye of the master following each detail, possibly a drawing made upon the spot for illustration of his idea and then destroyed, — such must have been his method.

In my childhood, my little sister and I were sometimes indulged with the privilege and delight of looking at our grandfather's English books on architecture, with numerous plates of the plans and elevations of country seats, hunting lodges, farmhouses, etc., the "house-books," as we called them, which were piled upon the dining-table while we searched eagerly for the well-known engravings. Soane's "Sketches of Architecture" was one of the titles; but our favorite was Plaw's "Rural Architecture," which contained the wonderful circular house "on an island in the Lake of Winandermere, designed and built by the Author," and also a charming farmhouse, Plate VII., of which we were very fond. Another great favorite was a "Design for a small House, on the Environs of a Town or Village, suitable for a family of a genteel Profession;" and the frontispiece, designed by the author, showed an English landscape, with two female figures, and represented Taste, accompanying Rural Simplicity, and pointing to the before-mentioned round villa on Lake Windermere.

I remember well, also, the beautiful plates of Westminster Abbey in "Malton's Tour," and the colored views in the "Microcosm of London."

Other books that belonged to my grandfather's library are, "Nuova Raccolta di cento Vedute antiche a Roma e sua vicinanza, da Achille e Pietro Parboni, 1831," and "A Treatise of Architecture. By that Excellent Master thereof, Sebastian le Clerc, Knight of the Empire, Designer and Engraver to the Cabinet of the late French King," etc.

This work has four dedications,—to "Worshipful Companies" of Carvers, Joyners, Bricklayers, and Masons of London, surmounted by their several coats-of-arms. It is the oldest book in the collection, for, although it bears no date of publication, it is inscribed on the title-page with the

name of Charles Bulfinch's uncle, Charles Ward Apthorp, and the date 1759. It might, therefore, have been a familiar companion of my grandfather's boyhood.

Besides these books, which still remain in the family, there were others, which were given, together with a few note-books and original drawings, to the Boston Society of Architects after the death of my father in 1870, and these are now preserved at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Here are found the Orders of Palladio and a careful compilation of notes on perspective, according to different authorities, with the English and French methods, made out in Mr. Bulfinch's own manuscript, with illustrations. Here is a scrap-book, containing a collection of engravings of classical entrances and archways, from John C. Borlach. A book is here of his own designs of the Unitarian Church in Washington, on the corner of Sixth and North D streets, with plans, elevations, and sections, on the unusual scale of six feet to an inch, a scale that we find in some other of his plans.

One book that contains some original designs has also drawings and measurements of other buildings, and among them a sketch of the beautiful "St. Stephen in Wallbrook," the choicest work of Sir Christopher Wren's genius. It is interesting to see what was the style that especially appealed to him.

Among the most noteworthy things in this collection is a little book containing "Rules of Work of the Carpenters in the Town of Boston," published in 1800. The architect's own clear and careful notes give this an added interest, and extend the scheme to other material not mentioned in the body of the work, with notes of his own measurements of various buildings.

No freehand drawings have come down to us from him,

nor is there anything to show that he was attracted by other forms of artistic expression than his own chosen one of architecture.

His work for the first few years is only partially known. The brief sketch of his life which he wrote, probably in old age and with a view mainly to its interest for his family, passes over his professional labors with few particulars, and in the list of his public buildings made out by himself no dates are given.

The second building of the Hollis Street Church is attributed to him in the "Massachusetts Magazine" for December, 1793, and was erected in 1788. This was the edifice taken down and removed to East Braintree in 1810, the portions having been floated thither, it is said, upon a raft.

His first undertaking after his marriage originated with himself, and was strongly characteristic of his feeling for home and country.

The old beacon pole, which — occasionally replaced — had kept watch for generations on the summit of the hill, was blown down in 1789, and in its stead was now erected, by his suggestion and design, a memorial column, of the Roman Doric order, built of brickwork, covered with stucco, and about sixty feet high by four in diameter, standing on a pedestal and crowned with a gilt eagle. Instead of bearing aloft the danger signal in time of war, it bore inscriptions which should serve to remind the restored and grateful community of the perils which had been safely passed through. It is supposed to have been the first monument to commemorate the Revolution.

We cannot, perhaps, do better than to quote here, nearly at its full length, a letter written in after years by a son of the architect, Thomas Bulfinch, to the "Boston Transcript," addressed to "Gleaner," Mr. N. I. Bowditch, whose interest-



ing articles on old landmarks were at that time attracting much attention : —

Sept. 25, 1855.

SIR, — As you have ingenuously confessed in one of your articles that you never saw Beacon Hill, you will permit one who saw it often, and had as a child a familiar acquaintance with its dandelions and buttercups, to tell you something about it. It was, at my earliest recollection, in its full glory, surmounted by a graceful column, on whose top perched a gilded eagle, and on whose base were those inscriptions which I am still young enough to go to the State House to copy, as I mean to do, for this article, before I have done. But let us go back to the time when the hill was as described by your ancient friend, when there was, in place of the column, a stone basement, on which rested four horizontal timbers, crossing each other in the centre. From this centre rose a mast, holding on its top a tar barrel, which in case of danger was to be set on fire, to be a beacon to the country round. This preparation was adapted to a time of war, but it was happily never needed ; when the war ended, the beacon was but a remnant of things that had been. Thus it remained till about four years after the war, when a young gentleman returned from Europe who had been passing a year in England, France, and Italy, led thither, not by motives of business, but, what was then unusual, by a love of art, particularly that art which in a young community is the most practically useful, — architecture. This young gentleman, Charles Bulfinch, was the son of that Bulfinch whose name, as the owner of the pasture, has found a place in some of your communications. On his return home he immediately began to put in exercise those tastes for architectural improvement which he had carried with him abroad, and nourished by all that

he saw. The first idea that occurred to him was to remove the unsightly timbers of the old beacon from their conspicuous site, and replace them with a handsome column, resembling, at an humble distance, those he had seen in London, Paris, and Rome. How the funds were obtained I do not know, but presume that the method that has been so often used since was employed, and a subscription paper passed round, and am équally well satisfied that in that case, as in later ones, the prime mover in the scheme had to take all the trouble and make up all deficiencies himself. The monument, designed by Mr. Bulfinch and built under his superintendence, bore on its pedestal tablets of slate, with inscriptions written by him. On two sides the principal civil and military events of the Revolution, with their dates, were inscribed. On the third and fourth sides we read as follows : —

TO COMMEMORATE  
 THAT TRAIN OF EVENTS  
 WHICH LED  
 TO THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION,  
 AND FINALLY SECURED  
 LIBERTY AND INDEPENDENCE  
 TO THE UNITED STATES,  
 THIS COLUMN IS ERECTED  
 BY THE VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS  
 OF THE CITIZENS  
 OF BOSTON.  
 MDCCXC.

## AMERICANS!

WHILE FROM THIS EMINENCE  
SCENES OF LUXURIANT FERTILITY,  
OF FLOURISHING COMMERCE,  
AND THE ABODES OF SOCIAL HAPPINESS,  
MEET YOUR VIEW,  
FORGET NOT THOSE  
WHO BY THEIR EXERTIONS  
HAVE SECURED TO YOU  
THESE BLESSINGS.

The column stood till about the year 1808, when at last the suit between the Hancock heirs and the town was decided in favor of the former, and it became certain that the hill must be dug down, with the exception of a limited space in the centre. It seemed useless for the town to retain this square pile of earth (for such it would have been), bounded with perpendicular sides, and therefore it was sold to share the fate of the rest. This is, according to my recollections, the reason why the town parted with what, if it could have been preserved entire, would have been, as you say, a unique and unrivalled ornament. But the times were hard; embargo and commercial restrictions had crushed the trade and dampened the spirits of the community. The liberal and public-spirited individual through whose agency the monument had been erected had fallen a victim to the derangements of the times, and, in the enterprise of Franklin Place, had made shipwreck of his fortunes. No other stood ready to redeem the hill from its fate by buying up the Hancock claim, and the hill fell and the monument disappeared, leaving only the tablets, which still meet the visitor's eye as he prepares to ascend to the lantern on the top of the State House, a spot from which a view similar to that which used to be commanded from the top of Beacon Hill may still be seen, with its "scenes of luxuriant fertility," etc.

At my earliest recollection the appearance of the hill was this : a grassy hemisphere, so steep that one could with difficulty mount its sides, descending with a perfectly regular curve to the streets on the south, west, and north. On the east it had been encroached upon and the contour was broken. Just opposite the end of Coolidge Avenue, on Derne Street, there was a flight of wooden steps, ten or fifteen in number, leading part way up the hill. After that, we had to climb the rest of the way, by aid of the foot-holes that had been worn in the surface, along a wide path worn bare by the feet, to the top, where there was also a space of some fifty feet square, worn bare of sod. In the midst of this space stood the monument. Descending by the south side, one followed a similar rough gravel path to another flight of plank steps, leading down to the level of Mt. Vernon Street, and terminating at about the position of the front of No. 13 Mt. Vernon Street, the first house of those facing south.

The sport of batting the ball up the hill and meeting it again on its descent was played by some ; but it was not so easy a game as one would at first suppose, on account of the difficulty of maintaining one's footing on the hillside, which was so steep as to require some skill even to stand erect on it. The appearance of the hill in winter I do not recollect ; but I think it must have been generally bare of snow, from its elevated position, and I do not recollect having ever seen sleds used on it. . . .

T. B.

The mast of the old beacon, described above, was still further strengthened by braces, and it bore a cross-bar or crane to support the iron frame to hold, as was intended, a burning tar barrel.

It should be added, that the position of the Beacon monument was exactly in the line of Temple Street.

The gilt eagle is at present suspended over the Speaker's desk in the House of Representatives ; and the four tablets with the inscriptions also remain in the State House, in the corridor, to the right of the Doric Hall.

Mr. Bulfinch has always been supposed by his family to have been the author of these inscriptions, but as a passage in the correspondence of Dr. Jeremy Belknap, pastor of the Federal Street Church, seems to imply that he also had a share in them, we give his words on the subject : —

“ Yesterday I was consulted on forming a set of inscriptions for a historical pillar, which is erecting on Beacon Hill. Some of the most striking events of the Revolution will be inscribed, beginning with the Stamp Act and ending with the Funding Act. These comprehend a period of twenty-five years. The one may be considered as the beginning, and the other as the conclusion, of the American Revolution. The pillar is to be sixty feet high ; over its capital, the American eagle, which is to perform the office of a weather-cock. The arrows are to serve for points, and a conductor is to be added for the lightning. The designer is Mr. Charles Bulfinch, a very ingenious and accomplished gentleman, and as modest as ingenious.” (Belknap Papers, ii. 233.)

The first child of Charles and Hannah Bulfinch was a little girl, born in 1789, and named for that young Sukey, of brilliant and tender memory, who had died some seven years before.

This was their only daughter, and was followed by several sons, but the parents had the grief of losing two of the little boys in infancy, from the fatal results of inocula-











tion, and the records in the mother's journal show that her bright young life was early touched by "the sense of tears in mortal things."

This journal lies before me as I write, — a small, thin book in paper covers, — containing entries, at intervals often of more than a year, from the time of her marriage until 1837. Here and there occurs a little poem, either by herself or her sister, and she sometimes gives a quotation from one of the favorite religious writers of that time.

After the death of the two boys, which left her with only her little girl remaining, she writes: —

"Heaven is just, and perhaps saw that our fond hearts were too firmly fixed towards the objects of this world to think with pleasure of a change, in the enjoyment of a kind partner, smiling children, health, affluence and contentment. Perhaps we had too much for mortality, and in the midst of prosperity felt too secure. We are now rous'd from our dream of happiness; we see that we have many blessings yet in possession, but sensibly experience that they are on the wing.

"Give us, oh, Thou that hast seen fit to chastise us, a temper of mind best suited to Thee, purify'd by affliction, and cheerfully yielding to Thy wise dispensations."

Her husband's sketch passes over these early years with but a few sentences. After speaking of the marriage and settlement near them of their sisters, Anna and Frances, and the great addition this made to their happiness, he adds: —

"I enjoyed too the confidence and good will of my fellow townsmen, who chose me one of their Selectmen at the early age of twenty-seven. The occupation attending this office and superintending the building of the State House after my plans afforded me sufficient and agreeable employment.

“Our pleasures were increased by the birth of children, and we had experience of the sorrows attending every condition of life, in the death of several of them ; but on this subject I will not enlarge, as their mother has so tenderly mentioned them in a memoir of herself.”

Mr. Bulfinch's appointment to a town office at this date, 1789, marked the beginning of a relation to the municipal government of Boston which continued with some brief interval for many years. He has left in his own handwriting a statement that he was a junior member of the Board of Selectmen from 1789 to 1793, and that he was chairman of the board for a period of twenty-one years, from 1797 to 1818. During this long space of time, many changes were effected in the town: streets were opened and widened, low and marsh land was filled up and laid out in streets, sidewalks built, streets paved, and public buildings, as well as private, erected.

A list of these changes, milestones on the road of progress from the country town to the great city, will be given in a later chapter, copied from his own manuscript.

On the 24th of August, 1791, he was elected a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, John Adams being then President.

The new State House was definitely undertaken somewhat later. It was not until 1795 that the land was secured and measures taken to erect upon it a building worthy of the Commonwealth, which was then the leading State in the Union. These intervening years were destined to be eventful ones to the architect. Plans for public improvement found ready acceptance, and schemes in some cases were set on foot which the still unsettled state of the times rendered insecure.

Among other changes, however, there came some modifi-

cation of the severe laws of the colonial period. We have seen the lively interest which the theatre excited in the minds of the young people on their wedding journey, and their ardent wishes for the establishment of a theatre in their own sober-minded town were now to be fulfilled. Evidently they had much to do themselves with bringing it about.

Up to this time there had been no regular theatre in Boston, but performances had been given sometimes in an irregular way, always more or less under the ban of public opinion, and in direct violation of the statute.

The first attempt seems to have been the performance of "Otway's Orphan," in 1750, at the British Coffee House, which incurred the severe displeasure of the authorities, and was followed by a law forbidding such performances in future under heavy penalties, the sum of twenty pounds to be paid by the owner of the premises so occupied, and each actor or spectator to forfeit the sum of five pounds.

During the siege, in 1775, the British officers had a theatre in Faneuil Hall, for their own entertainment and that of the royalist families in the town, where among other plays was produced General Burgoyne's drama, "The Blockade of Boston."

Since the Revolution, the feelings of the best class of citizens had come to be, not only tolerant of the drama, but decidedly favorable to its influence as an educating and broadening power; and it is interesting to note that the mature judgment of Charles Bulfinch led him to reverse the opinion pronounced against theatrical representations in his letters from France, and inclined him to be foremost in establishing them in Boston. A petition to open a theatre, signed by many influential persons, was presented to the legislature in June, 1790, but the attempt was un-

successful. During the next year an effort was made to repeal the law of prohibition. This, after a heated debate, the legislature still refused to do.

A test case soon arose, for the attempt was made, in 1792, with the aid of some comedians from London, to start a theatre in a building—a stable, it is said—fitted up for the purpose in Broad Alley, the present Hawley Street, then a muddy passageway leading to the old Trinity Church on Summer Street. But the performances were at once interrupted by the authorities and unceremoniously ended, at the instigation, as was supposed at the time, of the indignant Governor Hancock.

Legal opposition appears to have ceased, however, after this date. The law continued to remain on the statute book, but it had ceased to represent the real feeling of the people, and was treated practically as a dead letter. It was believed that a well-conducted theatre would meet with general approbation and encouragement, and accordingly in July, 1793, a conveyance was made of land lying at the corner of Federal and Franklin streets to the “trustees of the Boston Theatre,” of whom Mr. Bulfinch was one; and the building erected from his designs upon this site was first opened to the public on February 3, 1794, the tragedy of *Gustavus Vasa* being the first piece performed, with Charles Stuart Powell, manager. The prologue was written by Robert Treat Paine.

In recognition of the gift from the architect of the plans for the building, a gold medal, of much beauty of workmanship, was presented to Mr. Bulfinch by the owners, which, bearing appropriate inscriptions, shows us also the design of the front, having “a basement and principal story, with a projecting centre faced with four Corinthian columns with entablature and pediment. The order is continued across

the whole front, the intervals being occupied by arched windows. The basement is quite plain, with an arched entrance in the centre, flanked by a single square opening on each side. The façade has simplicity and repose, not without a certain festal character expressive of the purpose of the building.”<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Ashton R. Willard’s account of Mr. Bulfinch’s buildings contains an interesting description of this first theatre in Boston, the “Federal Street,” and also gives some curious facts regarding the theatre customs of that day.

“To undertake the building at all,” says Mr. Willard, “was a venturesome project in the state of public opinion in those days. . . . It is a little singular that the first theatre to be built in Boston should have had more of the individual character of a theatre in external aspect than any now standing in the city. It has come to be the habit in Boston, as in other cities, to make the theatre, so far as visible exterior is concerned, simply a narrow strip of façade crowded in among shop-fronts. Bulfinch’s theatre was a detached building. The design of it was graceful and appropriate, though not novel.” The present central building of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology is similar to the theatre in character, and nearly of the same proportions. It won high encomiums from the “Centinel” at the time, and “a poem was delivered by the manager on the night of the opening, which shows that architecture was not the only art at that day pervaded by the classic influence:—

“‘And now thou dome by Freedom’s patrons rear’d,  
With Beauty blazon’d and by Taste rever’d ;  
Apollo consecrates thy walls profane,  
Hence be thou sacred to the Muse’s reign !’”

<sup>1</sup> Mr. C. A. Cummings.

Mr. Willard notes, as curiously significant of the state of feeling then prevailing, that for a while no performance was given on the evening of the week-day religious meeting. The suspension took place at the voluntary wish of the management, though apparently a suggestion had been made also by the church in Federal Street looking towards such an accommodation.

It appears that this decision had already been reversed before the destruction of the theatre by fire in February, 1798, four years after its opening. When it was rebuilt, Mr. Bulfinch, who had charge of the restoration, adopted a much plainer design for the exterior, a greater proportion of the whole expense being allotted to the interior.

Among the family papers has been found the following draft of a letter, evidently written by Mr. Bulfinch within a few months after the opening of the original building, which is of interest here. It is in the architect's handwriting, and is inscribed —

Statement of % with Mr. J. Taylor

Invoice % Galen

D<sup>r</sup>. via New York

Commiss 5 P C

	£
C <sup>r</sup> . 1 <sup>st</sup> Remittance	150
% the Mary	350
	<hr/> 500 Stl <sup>s</sup>

BOSTON, June 11, 1794.

DEAR SIR, — I have now the pleasure of forwarding to you a bill of Exchange, drawn by Stephen Higginson Esq. upon Messrs. F. M. & D. Smit of Rotterdam, and payable in London. I have been anxious to remit this amount to you before, but all opportunities from this place have been pre-

vented by an embargo of nearly 3 months, which has interrupted the regular course of business. At foot I shall place a statement of your account with the Proprietors of the Theatre, and hope this remittance will cover all charges.

The Trustees of the Theatre direct me to make their acknowledgements to you for your attention and kindness in procuring so elegant a set of embellishments for their house. The price has much exceeded their expectations, but they pay it with chearfulness, as they are confident articles of equal elegance could not be procured on better terms. They have determined to allow you a commission of 5 P C on the purchase and interest as far as you have been obliged to pay it, or to advance. If these charges should exceed the sum now sent, please to make out a statement and charge the balance to my account, and it shall be paid immediately.

I have the satisfaction to be able to inform you that the Theatre meets the wishes and expectation of the public and has even drawn some marks of approbation from foreigners who have seen it. At my first leisure I shall give you a description of it, and of other extensive works carrying on here.

Mr. Powell is just closing his season, he has met with astonishing success, and his company has given satisfaction considering the short time he had to collect them in England; we however hope for a better, next winter. Mr. Powell promises that no exertions of his shall be wanting.

I am &c.

The building of the theatre was in fact but a part of the large undertaking by which Franklin Street was to be extended and improved. We are told by Drake that previous to the year 1792 all the lower part of this street was a quagmire, and that no greater change has taken place in



Boston than the conversion of this swamp into solid and useful ground.

Mr. Barrell, whose estate was on Summer Street, first drained the slough for a garden, in which he had built a fish-pond. Where the theatre was built had previously stood a distillery. The Boston Directory for 1789 shows an open tract, no streets being yet laid out in this area. Here it was that Mr. Bulfinch, in company with two other gentlemen, entered upon what was at that time an elaborate undertaking, and one which the state of the country soon rendered extremely hazardous.

The enterprise is best described in his own words, though it should be borne in mind that the date given by him, writing as he does from memory in after years, refers to the culmination of the affair rather than to its beginning, for the buildings of Franklin Place must have been begun in 1793, and many of them finished within the same year:—

Thus tranquilly passed our time until 1796, when I was induced to join W<sup>m</sup> Scollay and Ch<sup>s</sup> Vaughan in the purchase of Mr. Barrell's extensive garden and pasture ground, and projected a scheme for building sixteen houses in a Crescent form.

This was to be effected by a subscription of shares on a Tontine principle; one half of the project was offered to the public, but only one half of the number of shares was subscribed for, and the remainder continued at the risk of the company.

[When one half of the Crescent was completed, Mr. Vaughan had been seriously advised by his brother in London against such an undertaking, and Mr. Bulfinch proceeds:—]

I agreed to discharge him from all obligation and take

his share of the concern upon myself. Mr. Scollay too was little able to make advances, still I was so sanguine respecting the success of the project, that I persevered in completing the whole range.

But this was done at heavy interest on loans and losses on forced sales, till on the eve of an expected rupture with England, just before the settlement of topics of dispute by Mr. Jay's treaty, property of every kind was at so low an ebb that no sales could be made and no further loans obtained and I was obliged to become bankrupt and assign the property for creditors ; in the consequences of this project, my father and brother G. Storer were involved as my endorsers.

With what remorse have I looked back on these events, when blindly gratifying a taste for a favorite pursuit, I involved for life myself and wife with our children — my Father and Mother and Sisters, who all held the utmost confidence in my measures and pride in my expected success.

They all bore the loss and mortification without repining. My inexperience and that of my agents Messrs ——— and ——— in conducting business of this nature, together with my earnest desire to discharge all demands as far as possible, led me to surrender all my property, even that obtained by marriage, which was intended to be secured to my wife and her heirs, but from a defect in the form of settlement this property was included with the rest, and I found myself reduced to my personal exertions for support. I had some satisfaction in knowing that not one of my creditors was materially injured, many were secured to the full amount, and the deduction on the balance due to workmen did not exceed 10 P C on their entire bills. My fellow townsmen evinced their continued regard by reinstating me on the board of Selectmen, of which I now became Chair-

man, and as no salary was connected to that office, they appointed me Superintendent of Police, with a salary of six hundred dollars.

Although this employment was irksome and little suited to my taste or character, I undertook to discharge its duties, and it enabled me, with my personal attention as Architect, to support my family in respectable simplicity, which my dear wife submitted to with cheerfulness.

Soon after my failure my younger sister was married to Joseph Coolidge, son of Joseph Coolidge, Esq., merchant, who purchased the mansion house in Bowdoin square, and enlarged and repaired it for his son, and I had the gratification to see my good father and mother living for the remainder of their lives under the roof of their own home, tenderly attended to by their daughter and her worthy and liberal husband.

The enterprise that proved so fatal to his fortunes had been indeed a tempting one to an aspiring young architect. Mr. Willard writes of it: "If the casual visitor in Boston casts a momentary glance down Franklin Street as he passes the point where it joins Washington Street, his attention will not unlikely be arrested for a moment by the large, regular sweep of marble buildings to be seen on the right. He would certainly notice it in any other city than Boston. Bulfinch designed this curve, and from 1793 until 1855 there stood here a long block of symmetrical houses built by him, extending from Hawley to Devonshire streets. He appears to have been singularly quick to catch a new idea, singularly anxious to understand and apply his art as the most advanced thinkers of his day understood and applied it. When he was in London, the idea of uniting a lot of house-fronts, and decorating them in such







*Facsimile of Original Drawing by Charles Bulfinch of Archway in Franklin Crescent*

FAC-SIMILE OF ORIGINAL DRAWING BY CHARLES BULFINCH OF ARCHWAY IN  
FRANKLIN CRESCENT



a way as to give them the character of one large, imposing building, was still in its infancy. The further idea of introducing grace and grandeur into city streets, by deliberately planning them in large geometrical curves of uniform buildings, does not seem to have been once actually applied. The most prominent and familiar of these curves, Regent's Quadrant, was not cut through the old streets above Piccadilly until after 1812, when Nash had come to the front. A London map of 1804 shows no crescents. There was in existence, however, at the time of Bulfinch's visit, a design of two semicircles facing each other, with a park space in the centre, intended as a continuation of Portland Place, one of the building projects of the Adam brothers, and it does not seem unnatural to infer that the American architect may have obtained his idea from this design. The Adam brothers were among the most prominent architects of the day, and their projects must have been well known. It was the Adam brothers who introduced into London the plan of combining dwellings in large blocks, and giving the whole the character of one building; at least, they are given the credit of introducing it."

Describing the Franklin crescent, he goes on to say: "The houses were three stories in height. At the ends and in the centre, slender pilasters rose from the level of the principal story to the roof. The central building was not like the others in general character. It was carried a little higher by a low attic crowned with a pediment; and the basement story was pierced by three openings, admitting to an open passageway beneath the buildings. The whole height of the principal story in the centre, between the columns, was occupied by a Venetian window. Over the central arch, beneath this Venetian window, used to hang



the sign 'Arch Street.' Arch Street is still there, though all visible reason for its being called so has disappeared.

"Franklin Place was made beautiful in its best days by trees and shrubbery. There was originally a long, semi-oval park space, which the old deeds provided should be left open 'for the accommodation, convenience and beauty' of the houses in the square."

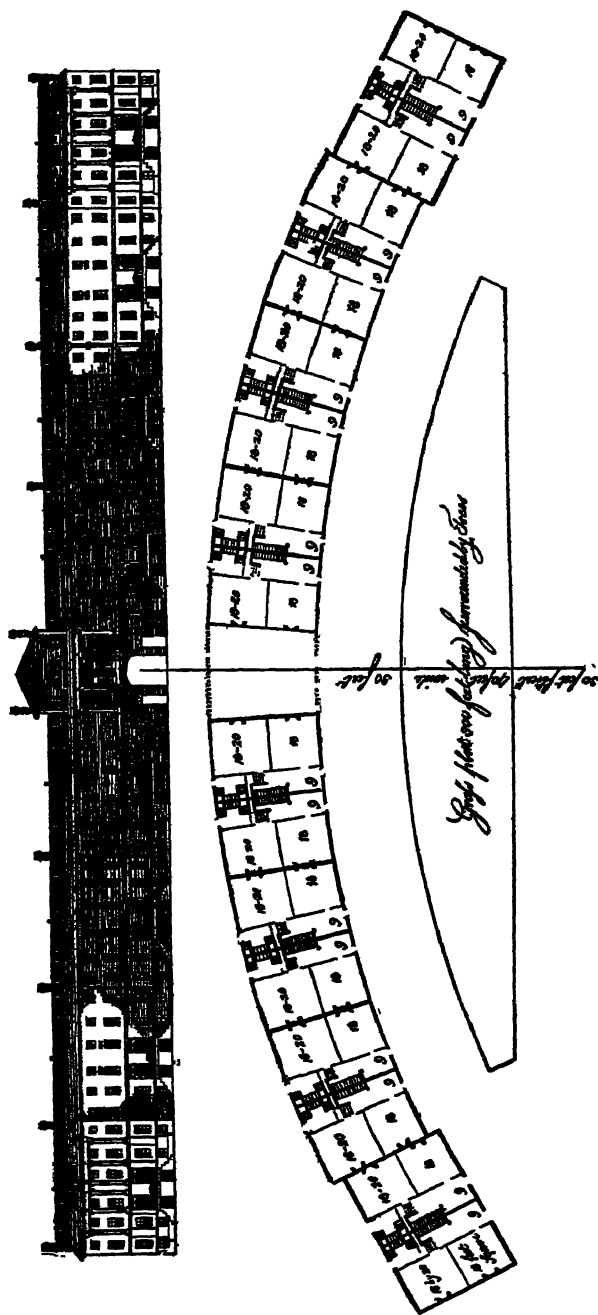
An urn of Bath oölite stone, of a graceful classic design, used to stand upon a pedestal in the centre of this oval. It was imported from Italy by Mr. Bulfinch, and was placed there as a memorial to Franklin, then recently deceased.

The original plan had been a symmetrical one, the street having a corresponding curve on each side, but it was found impracticable to secure the requisite amount of land on the north side, which therefore formed a straight line. The rooms over the arch were given to the Boston Library and Massachusetts Historical Society.

I find a copy of the deed of gift to the former society, which was recorded in the Suffolk deeds on February 2, 1796, "at 40 minutes past twelve o'clock, noon," and signed and sealed by Charles Bulfinch, with Hannah his wife, wherein, "for the encouragement of literature, and in consideration of the sum of five shillings," etc., he releases and quitclaims the room and staircase to the Boston Library Society and their successors forever.

For many years the dwellings of Franklin Place were among the most desirable in the city, and occupied by prominent families. In the last house before coming to the theatre lived at one time the beautiful Emily Marshall, whose fame for loveliness of character as well as of person has come down to our own day.

Among the early recollections of my childhood is that of taking the Dorchester omnibus, which waited for passengers



PLAN OF THE TONTINE BUILDINGS, FRANKLIN PLACE

*From the Massachusetts Magazine, 1794*

at the corner of Washington and Franklin streets, and rumbling under the archway as we started on our journey out of town through Arch and Summer streets.

To my grandfather's words respecting his failure and loss of fortune, little need be added, and in truth at this distance of time little further is known. It is difficult in our age, of very different business and social standards, to realize just what a reverse like this must have meant in the Boston society of a hundred years ago. That it did not imply any cause for loss of confidence on the part of his fellow-townsmen he might well feel profoundly grateful, but, combined with his second business misfortune of a few years later, it produced upon his naturally serious temper a deep and lasting impression. An illustration of this feeling is found in a small manual of family prayers, which he was in the habit of using in his advanced life, and where a number of sentences have been crossed through with a pen, as if to be omitted. The expressions are those which seem to recognize the consciousness of prosperity or success in earthly undertakings, and to which he evidently felt that he had no claim.

It is probable that he said little at any time on the subject of these early trials, but his children knew that his regret was mingled with sorrow that he was debarred, notwithstanding all his industry, from doing for them, as the years went on, what his father had done for him, and giving them those advantages in their opening career, never indeed of the first importance to a vigorous character, but which cannot lightly be disdained.

The pages of his wife's journal reveal something of the course of events in their home life during these years. The next entry after the death of the two boys records the

absence of her husband “for the first time since our marriage, and my anxious heart sincerely hopes it may be the last. The impatience I feel for his return from this short journey which business only has occasioned, shows how great my dependance is on him for all the happiness of my life, and convinces me that altho’ Heaven has been pleas’d to deprive me of my little infants, it has left me an object of far greater importance to cheer the hours of sadness and care which must at times interrupt the content of every human being.”

She already feels, at twenty-five, that she is one “who has known the extremes of happiness and misfortune, and who wishes to preserve her mind in such a state that it may never be *surpriz’d* by either. The regular life we lead, the temperate, philosophic turn of my Husband, is fortunately calculated to calm those agitations which the death of my children occasion’d. It has however been truly needful, or my spirits had sunk under the malady which was brought on by our calamity. My disorder is nervous, but never till this last season of distress has it been my companion. So new and so various are the sensations I sometimes experience that it requires an exertion of mental strength to oppose its power. I continue to hope that time will lessen the complaint and restore me wholly to myself. Good principles, a quiet conscience and religious life, are the best remedy for an afflicted heart.” After the death of yet another infant, however, their mother was made happy by the birth of a son, in 1794, Charles, — the eldest of the group of boys that grew up around her. The following year she has to record the death of her beloved grandfather, Sheriff Greenleaf. “At the age of 90 he resign’d that life which had been used in the service of others, having spent his youth in the performance of every social and

domestic virtue, and his old age in forming the minds of his three orphan children ; who while we respected him did most affectionately, most tenderly love and sincerely lament for him, — tho' *for him* unjustly, as the bright reward of the Christian is undoubtedly his own."

On July 12, 1795, she writes that many happy months have succeeded each other, distinguished by prosperity and domestic enjoyment. Her brother's marriage had enlarged the family circle and added to its happiness. "Affluence and content are ours, virtue and innocence the aim of our lives, the object of our wishes. Four families consisting of Brothers and Sisters, situated near each other and by affection still nearer, what more can we wish for except the continuance of our family harmony, and improvement in piety and benevolence? The world has nothing more to give, and we must own with humility these are above our deserts. "Let me," she exclaims, "for my own advantage upon this grateful retrospect copy the sublime instructions of my favorite Blair."

Here follows a passage of some length, beginning, "As men, then, bethink yourselves of human instability," which is sorrowfully prophetic of coming changes to the young wife and mother. Under the date of September 1st, in 1796, we find her first entry after the disaster of Franklin Place, recording the birth of Thomas : —

- "It has pleased the merciful Author of my being to lead me safely through distress of mind and anguish of body to the present period and to give to my hopes another son on the 15th of July, and I in gratitude bend the knee and raise unfeigned the eye of humility and thankfulness. Let me not be too anxious how these tender objects of my affection shall be cloath'd and fed, or repine that my infant should be born in poverty and myself with my Husband and other

little ones now eating the bread of dependance. Let me rejoice that we have health, Friends, and a good conscience, and when, if ever, my sweet children peruse these lines, may they be assur'd that in virtue and integrity we may find happiness, tho' the advantages of fortune with all other darling, unsubstantial resources have vanish'd. . . . This ensuing Season will bring before me new trials connected with the different station in life to which our misfortunes have reduc'd us, creditors hard and unfeeling refuse to my Husband that settlement which again would leave him free to exert his faculties for the support of his family. We are consequently still dependant. Can I in adversity be patient, unrepining, and economical, can I preserve that equality of mind which alone gives dignity to such a fall? This, however, I must try to do, or lose what is above all price — self esteem. 'Tis, my Beloved Sister, thy Friendship, thy encouraging, partial friendship, which supports me, and thy example as wife and mother which animates me in the practise of these superior duties.

"We are at this date in a small dwelling, the rent of which is paid by our attentive and affectionate Brother Apthorp."

The friends who knew Hannah Bulfinch in her early married life have left their testimony to the noble manner in which she bore herself under these changed conditions. Her note-book, which received the frank and intimate confessions of her heart, shows that she was far from insensible to them, but no repining at her losses or unaccustomed cares seems to have been apparent in her outward life.

One of her sons has written of her, alluding to these friends of her youth:—

"They say that while everything in the habits of the woman of fortune inconsistent with her altered circumstances

was dropped instantly, and the business habits of a good kousekeeper immediately adopted, she never laid aside, in any scenes of joy or sorrow, the deportment of a lady, nor the graceful, unembarrassed manner in which she could still meet the friends of former days, delighting in their society and ever cheerful and attractive in it. But in the narrow circle of home, to which her increasing cares confined her almost exclusively, she seemed to feel no want of other society than that of her husband and her children."

When her means were restricted, her generous heart contrived new ways of serving others, and we are told that she often alluded with "a bewitching playfulness" to her loss of fortune, which showed that her spring of happiness was not embittered by it.

The sweetness of disposition that was hers by nature, cherished also by her religious principles, inclined her to look on the brightest side of events as well as persons, and made her a favorite and charming companion. "For her chosen friends and for her children she manifested always the very enthusiasm of affection."

"May 10th, 1797. We have accepted the friendly invitation of Mr. B——'s Sister Storer, to join them in unitedly supporting our families, living with them in their house. This, as it saves house rent, is our duty to comply with, and as in the society of such valuable friends we find our first consolation, it is our pleasure also. Here, then, is another change. Read, my children, the wanderings of your mother, who once thought herself plac'd by fortune far above these vicissitudes. Learn by it how liable you are to the same, even should your lot at first be prosperous; acquire in season those virtues which may enable you to bear them properly, and humbly confiding in God wait cheerfully for what may be decreed you.

"Oct. 7th, 1798. We still continue in the house of our friends Anna and George Storer, whose unremitted kindness has restor'd our cheerfulness, and convey'd a charm above all price to our hearts. It arises from the enjoyment of social intercourse, of sympathizing regard. We are united by interest and by every tie that gratitude can form."

The aged grandmother, Madame Grizzell Apthorp, had passed away, in her eighty-eighth year, just before the marriage of Elizabeth.

This marriage was an event which brought new life and animation to the home in Bowdoin Square. Mr. Coolidge was also a descendant, through the Boyer family, of Adino Bulfinch. He was a man of a noble type and unbounded hospitality and benevolence.

It was at this time that the large pasture opposite the homestead was sold, and the portion fronting the square became the property of Mr. Kirk Boott, whose fine residence built thereon was afterwards raised and enlarged to form the present Revere House. It is said that Mr. Boott paid seven thousand dollars for this piece of land, and that desirable land on Beacon Street could then be obtained at a much lower price. But these were the golden days of the square, and it was considered, we are told, "the very centre and nucleus of aristocracy and fashion."



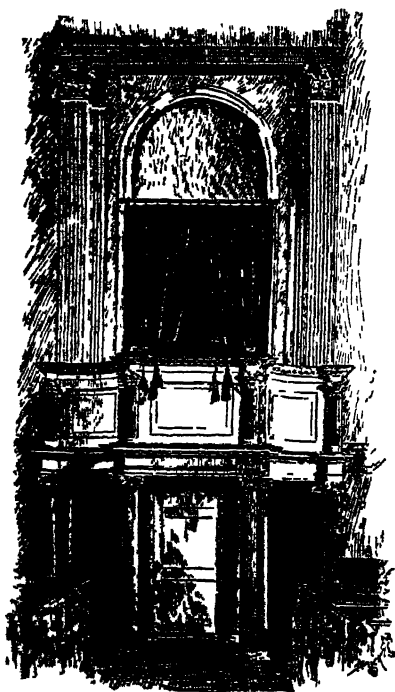
## CHAPTER V

### ARCHITECT AND CHAIRMAN OF SELECTMEN

1798 - 1818

Out of love and hatred; out of earnings, and borrowings, and lendings, and losses; out of sickness and pain; out of wooing and worshipping; out of travelling, and voting, and watching, and caring, out of disgrace and contempt, comes our tuition in the serene and beautiful laws.

R. W. EMERSON.



heirs. If this lot could not be obtained, the committee were

THE Massachusetts State House, meantime, was approaching completion on the sunny slope of Beacon Hill. The plans for providing new quarters for the state government had come to maturity in 1795, when, by a resolve of the General Court on February 16, Edward H. Robbins, Thomas Dawes, and Charles Bulfinch were appointed a committee to erect a State House on a lot of ground commonly called "the Governor's pasture," containing about two acres, adjoining Governor Hancock's garden, then owned by his

empowered to take a deed from the town of Boston of an equal quantity of land at the northeasterly part of the common, "opposite the almshouse."

The Hancock lot was obtained, and on the 4th of July in the same year the corner-stone of the building was laid by Governor Samuel Adams, assisted by Paul Revere as Masonic Grand Master, with imposing ceremonies, the stone having been drawn to the place by fifteen white horses, corresponding with the number of States then in the Union.

The building was completed within three years. In January, 1798, the legislature assembled for the last time in the Old State House, and then marched in a body to take possession of their new quarters, Increase Sumner being then governor.

On May 4, 1800, a resolve was passed approving the final account of the committee.

The sum of eight thousand pounds had been appropriated for the building at first, and additional sums given from time to time, making the whole original cost something over one hundred and thirty-three thousand dollars. Economy had forbidden the use of the costliest materials. The gilded dome that now meets our eyes on the horizon from so large a neighboring tract of country, and greets us as we enter the harbor, was then merely painted yellow. The columns in the Doric Hall, and those forming the colonnade in front were trees growing near a lake in Maine, in Township No. 5, now Calais, on land owned by Lieutenant-Governor Robbins, then Speaker of the House and a member of the commission.

But, though our native woods supplied the place of granite or marble, the rise of the fair and classic structure on this commanding height, above the Hancock house and the other dwellings and gardens of Beacon Street, with the

beautiful pasture of the Common below and the encircling waters of the river in full view, was a sight that filled with pride the Bostonians of that day, and visitors from all parts of the young Commonwealth.

The "Columbian Centinel" compares the situation with the most attractive scenes abroad, — the famous Bay of Naples, or the Castle Hill of Edinburgh.

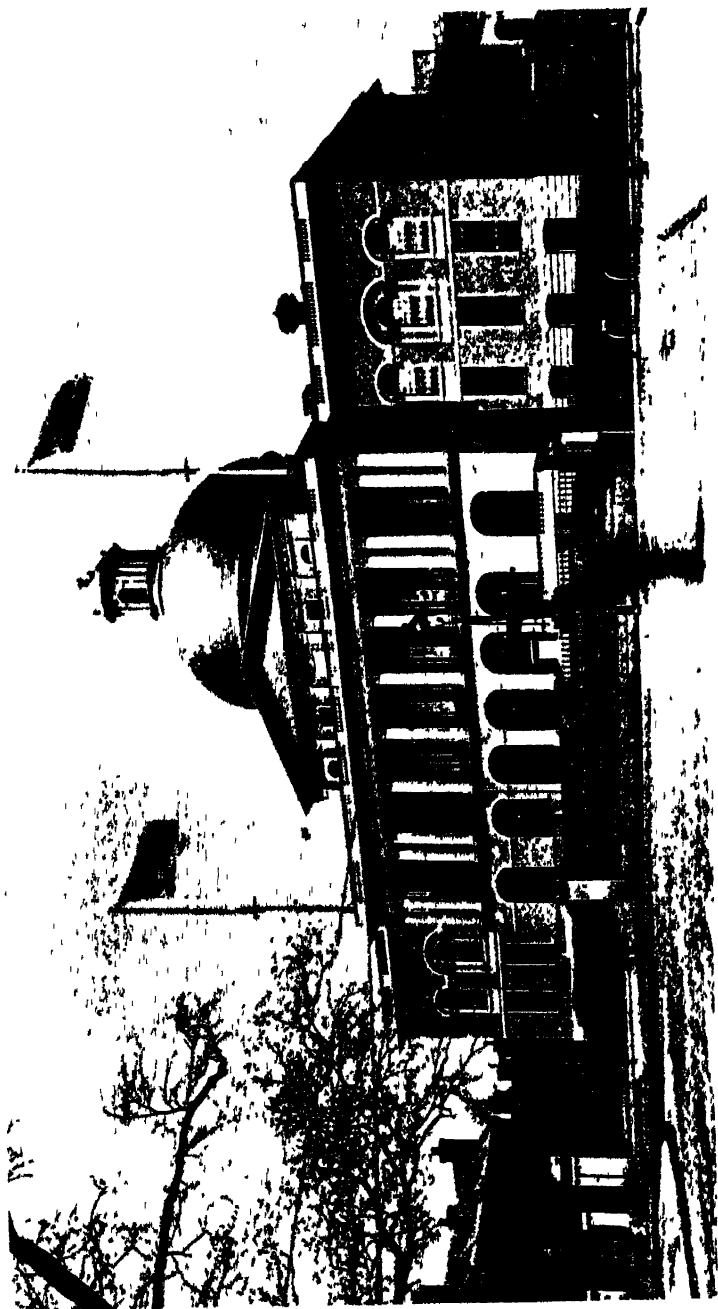
Mr. Cummings writes: "The site was not then, as now, the crown of the hill; behind it rose, as we have said above, the round grassy knoll bearing the monumental column erected by Bulfinch five years before. The original design of the State House was different in some respects from the building which was erected, as that was different in some respects from the building we see to-day. Considerations of site and considerations of cost are understood to have compelled certain modifications of the design, of which the shortening of the wings was the most important. Concerning these modifications there is, however, no exact knowledge, as the original drawings have unfortunately not been preserved. They did not seriously affect the integrity of the design, whose noble and simple dignity so well becomes the commanding site."

Regarding this design, we should remember that there was not, at that time in this country any building worthy to be a model for such an edifice, and it is doubtful if any then existed that would have been suited to the wants of an American legislature. Indeed, as a son of the architect once wrote, "legislative halls are the product of American institutions, and in this branch of architecture the artist had at that time neither example nor warning."

As a strong desire has been felt to examine the original plans of the building, a diligent search has been made for them at various times, but without success.







THE STATE HOUSE, BOSTON



The exterior front of the State House presents now, in 1895, substantially the same appearance that it did when erected, one hundred years ago. The chief alteration seen is in the windows of the first story, which were lengthened at the time of certain interior changes, when the lower rooms, with the exception of Doric Hall, were horizontally divided, and additional light was required for the chambers thus formed.

The building was originally described as measuring 173 feet in length by 61 in depth, but the large additions made in 1853-54, from plans by Mr. Bryant, greatly increased the depth, and included many changes in the older portion, which, with the serious injury to the original proportions named above, have resulted in the almost total alteration of the interior. The entrance, or Doric Hall, the Senate Chamber and Representatives' Hall, the Governor's Room and Council Chamber, still remain little changed, but staircases, corridors, and all the rooms of the first story are entirely altered.

In recent years we have witnessed the still further enlargement of the State House by the great extension in the rear, for which the Bryant annex was removed, and which, begun in 1889, is hardly as yet completed.

As this work has progressed it has aroused the public mind to the danger threatening the time-honored structure of being completely overwhelmed and displaced, if not entirely demolished, in the interests of the immense machinery of modern life.

It is as yet uncertain what its fate will be,—whether it may not be found already undermined and ruined by the work upon the additions; whether, if not yet too late, the public sentiment that has called for its preservation be heeded, and it be kept for future time as nearly as possible



in its original form, strengthened and rendered fire-proof, as advised by a special commission of expert authorities in a recent report to the legislature; or whether, on the other hand, it be rebuilt on a larger scale, with some resemblance, perhaps, to the old model, but at the cost of forever destroying a genuine relic of the first century of the Republic.

Its traditions are closely interwoven with our history, and its walls are alive with associations of the famous men of the past. Here has echoed the eloquence of John Hancock and of the older and the younger Adams; and here in the lower hall Lafayette was received on August 26, 1824. It is said, I know not with how much truth, that the stars and stripes were here first given to the breeze.

Dr. Edward Everett Hale has reminded us of its associations with the names of Webster, Parsons, Story, and Sumner; has told us that Wendell Phillips pleaded here before committees when no constituency would elect him to sit as member of the legislature; and that here was Governor Andrew's harbor of refuge during the War of the Rebellion, and often the only place where he could lie down to sleep. A history, he concludes, of the legislation of Massachusetts for the last hundred years, of which this building is a monument, would be the most practical lesson in constitutional government known.

The Federal Street Theatre, having been destroyed by fire only four years after it was built, was now, in 1798, rebuilt from designs of Mr. Bulfinch, apparently on the same ground-plan, but without the colonnaded portico, with no pediment nor pilasters, and with simple round-topped windows in place of the Venetian. The interior, however, received careful attention and a larger share of the expense. The architect won high praise for its general arrangement and acoustic properties, with the admirable

accommodations provided for the audience, while the decorations appeared to the critics of the time as being "of unparalleled elegance." This building remained for many years.

The twenty years now following embraced nearly all of Mr. Bulfinch's architectural work in New England, and it seems best, therefore, to enumerate here all his buildings of that period which are known, giving the date of their erection wherever it is ascertained.

In 1801 we find that he furnished the design for a courthouse in Worcester, built of brick. This was afterwards enlarged, and still later was superseded by a new one, but the original was allowed to remain. Its chief ornament was a cupola bearing a statue of Justice.

The next date known to us is that of the Church of the Holy Cross, the first Catholic church in New England, excepting possibly one in Maine, and to whose construction Protestants as well as Catholics generously contributed, through their regard for the eminent French bishop, John Cheverus, the friend of James Otis and Josiah Quincy and many leading men of the time, including also Charles Bulfinch. It has been said that the latter presented to the church not only the design for the building, but also the land on which it was built, at the foot of Franklin Street, below the Crescent, on the south side; but the more correct statement probably is, that the Boston Theatre Corporation, of which he was one, sold them the land at a low figure. The building had no spire, but a low cupola, and was ornamented with the slender, high pilasters then in vogue. On September 29, 1803, it was dedicated as a parish church, and later became a cathedral, a group of religious houses growing up near it, so that the whole became known as the "Cathedral Buildings." The accommodations of the church

in later years were inadequate to the number of worshippers, and about the year 1838 Dr. Channing's parishioners, on their way down Franklin Street to their own church, grew accustomed to the sight of large numbers of the Catholic congregation kneeling out in the street, unable to find entrance.

In grateful recognition of Mr. Bulfinch's gifts to the church, a beautiful silver tea-urn was presented to him, valued at one hundred and sixty-five dollars, a large sum for that time, which bears the following inscription:—

TO CHARLES BULFINCH  
ESQ<sup>r</sup>  
PRESENTED BY THE CATHOLICS  
OF BOSTON  
JAN<sup>y</sup> 1, 1806.

Above the lines the initials C. B. are fancifully engraved.

The church and its dependencies were long since removed to make way for business houses, which in their turn were destroyed in the great fire of November, 1872, laying waste so wide an area in this part of Boston. Substantial granite blocks now cover the site where'once stood the Cathedral Buildings, the old Federal Street Theatre, and the shady homes of Franklin Place.

Of his next recorded work Mr. Willard gives the following particulars:—

"While this [the Church of the Holy Cross] was building, Bulfinch began the erection of another church, similar in design, which is still standing. This is the church, originally called the 'New North,' at the foot of Hanover Street, near the East Boston ferry. It was dedicated May 2, 1804, by a Congregational society, which was an offshoot of the Old North society.

"Long ago the original proprietors left it, and it has been

since consecrated as a Catholic church. The 'Centinel' printed a short item about this church the Saturday after it was opened, which gives an idea of the favorable judgment pronounced upon it at the time. This item is graced by a poetical quotation which the writer found somewhere, and evidently felt to be *apropos*, and I quote it, poetry and all: 'On Wednesday afternoon the Rev. Dr. Eliot's new and elegant meeting-house at the north part of this town was consecrated to the service of God. . . . The building reflects honor upon the professional talents of the architect, Charles Bulfinch, Esq. The exterior is in bold and commanding style; the front is decorated with stone pilasters of a composed order; a series of Attic pilasters over them, a tower and a cupola, terminated with a handsome vane about 100 feet from the foundation. The inside is a perfect square of 72 feet; two ranges of Dorick columns under the galleries, and Corinthian over them, support the ceiling, which rises in an arch of moderate elevation in the centre.

"The modest Doric forms the solid base,  
The gay Corinthian holds the higher place;  
Thus all below is strength and all above is grace."

"The whole interior is remarkably adapted for sight and sound, and is one of the most correct pieces of church architecture in our country."

"The church at the foot of Hanover Street is, I think, the only church known with certainty to have been designed by Bulfinch now standing in Boston."

The modernizing of the First Church in Charlestown, in 1804, is attributed to Mr. Bulfinch in Frothingham's "History of Charlestown" and Hunnewell's "Century of Town Life."

The State Prison at Charlestown was built by him at this time, in 1804-5, the original building being of granite,

200 feet long by 40 wide, and four stories high. Other buildings were added later, and a new wing has just been completed, giving greatly increased accommodations.

This, too, was the date when Park Street, at the time called Park Place, was laid out and built, also from Mr. Bulfinch's plans, the old workhouse and pound having been moved away. Park Street Church, however, does not owe its origin to him. It was built later, in 1810, on the site of the old granary, from the design of Peter Bonner, an English architect.

In 1805 Mr. Bulfinch designed a brick court-house and town-house combined, for the town of Newburyport. This, Mr. Willard tells us, "escaped the great fire of 1811, famous in the annals of the town, for it stood away from the business centre, in a commanding position, upon that fine street of old mansions which runs along the summit of the hill. But it met with a worse fate in 1853, when it was changed over into the taste of the day. The figure of Justice which used to stand upon it was then removed, and the entire exterior of the house was modernized and finished with mastic cement. The change was so thorough that no one could now discover any traces of Bulfinch's handiwork about it. The demand for an alteration of the interior may have been an imperative one, but it was a pity to destroy without cause an exterior which dated from Newburyport's golden age at the beginning of the century."

A friend whose early home was in Newburyport tells me that the children, when they heard the bell ring on the Harris Street Church for the opening of the court, used to repeat the following rhyme : —

"Run, boys, run !  
The court's begun !  
Stand 'fore the justice  
And tell what you've done "

The children then believed that the figure of Justice would tip her scales.

I am told that the figure is still preserved, a valued relic, at "Indian Hill Farm."

Another work of great interest was undertaken the same year. Faneuil Hall, built from the plans of the artist Smibert, had been rebuilt after the fire of 1761, but not enlarged. This was the task now entrusted to Charles Bulfinch, who greatly extended its dimensions by doubling the width and adding a third story, thus giving space for those popular assemblies, the mass meetings of citizens, which we have learned to associate with that venerable structure.

Mr. Willard calls attention to the fact that Mr. Bulfinch was careful, in his alterations, to preserve as far as possible the old effect. For example, where pilasters were used, in the old building, of the Tuscan order below and Doric above, he carries out the sequence by placing the Ionic order in his third story, so that there may be no change of character. The present audience room is thought to be completely his own design, as the alterations and change of scale would have made an entire rearrangement necessary.

I find a draft, in my grandfather's handwriting, of what seems to be a report or address on the completion of this work. After giving the earlier history of Peter Faneuil's gift he continues:—

"Although the hall was sufficient for a number of years for the transaction of the ordinary business of the town, yet on every interesting occasion, when large numbers of the inhabitants were assembled, it became necessary to adjourn to some larger building, and, the Old South Church being most capacious and most conveniently situated of any, the proprietors of that house were ready to allow the town the use of it, while the questions to be considered were of great

political importance; but upon the increased population of the town, and the frequent occurrence of questions of a local nature which, however, interested and called together a great number of the citizens, the proprietors of the places of public worship became unwilling to admit such large numbers to the free use of their buildings.

“In 1805 the Selectmen offered to the town a plan for the enlargement of the hall, which was accepted, and they were directed to carry it into effect. The work has proceeded with uncommon dispatch and without any unfavorable accident, and in twelve months has been completed, *we believe*, to very general satisfaction.

“The great hall is 76 feet square and 28 feet high, with galleries on three sides, upon Dorick columns. The ceiling is supported by two ranges of Ionick columns, the walls enriched with pilasters and the windows with architraves, &c. Platforms under and in the galleries rise amphitheatrically to accommodate spectators, and the whole appears well calculated for sight and sound. The noble painting of Washington by Stuart . . . is placed at the east end, over the Selectmen’s seat. Above the great hall is another, 76 feet long and 30 feet wide, devoted to the exercise of the different military corps of the town, with a number of apartments on each side for depositing their arms, where those of the several companies are arranged and kept in perfect order. This military hall is lighted by large semi-circular windows at the ends, and lutherns through the roof at the sides.

“The lower story is appropriated, according to the original intention, as a market, and the cellars are let for various purposes of business. The income of the stalls and cellars will produce a permanent and handsome interest upon the money expended in the enlargement.

"The building also contains convenient offices for the Selectmen, Board of Health, Assessors, and Town Treasurer.

"On the outside it has been the aim of the agents to conform to the original style of the building, that with the additions it should appear a uniform and consistent pile."

It may be interesting to insert here a note received by Charles Bulfinch in later years, which conveys its own explanation :—

BOSTON, Oct. 26, 1839.

CHARLES BULFINCH, Esq. — *Sir*,—I have received and examined with much interest the plans of Faneuil Hall, and the statement accompanying them, which you have sent to this office for preservation in the city archives. Every memorial of former benefactors of the public is highly valuable, and there have been few who have been at once so liberal and so fortunate as Peter Faneuil, whose name must, through all history, be associated with the most important political revolution which has yet taken place in the world.

I beg leave to return you the thanks of the City Government for your donation, and to assure you of the interest which will not fail to be felt in it by many generations of your and my successors.

Very respectfully, your obed<sup>t</sup> serv<sup>t</sup>,

SAM<sup>l</sup> A. ELIOT, Mayor.

If the result of the alterations made in Faneuil Hall has been sometimes criticised as bare and monotonous, at least there is about it an archaic simplicity of effect which is in harmony with its traditions.

The lofty spire of the old Christ Church, famous in the annals of the North End, having been blown down in 1804,



doing great havoc among the house-roofs beneath it, we find that in 1807 it was rebuilt from Mr. Bulfinch's designs, rising to within sixteen feet of the height of the original (one hundred and ninety-one feet), and adhering to the old model in its style.

Alluding to this delicacy of feeling when called upon for restorations, Mr. Willard says: "Bulfinch has fairly earned, by his respectful treatment of old historical monuments, a similar treatment of his own buildings."

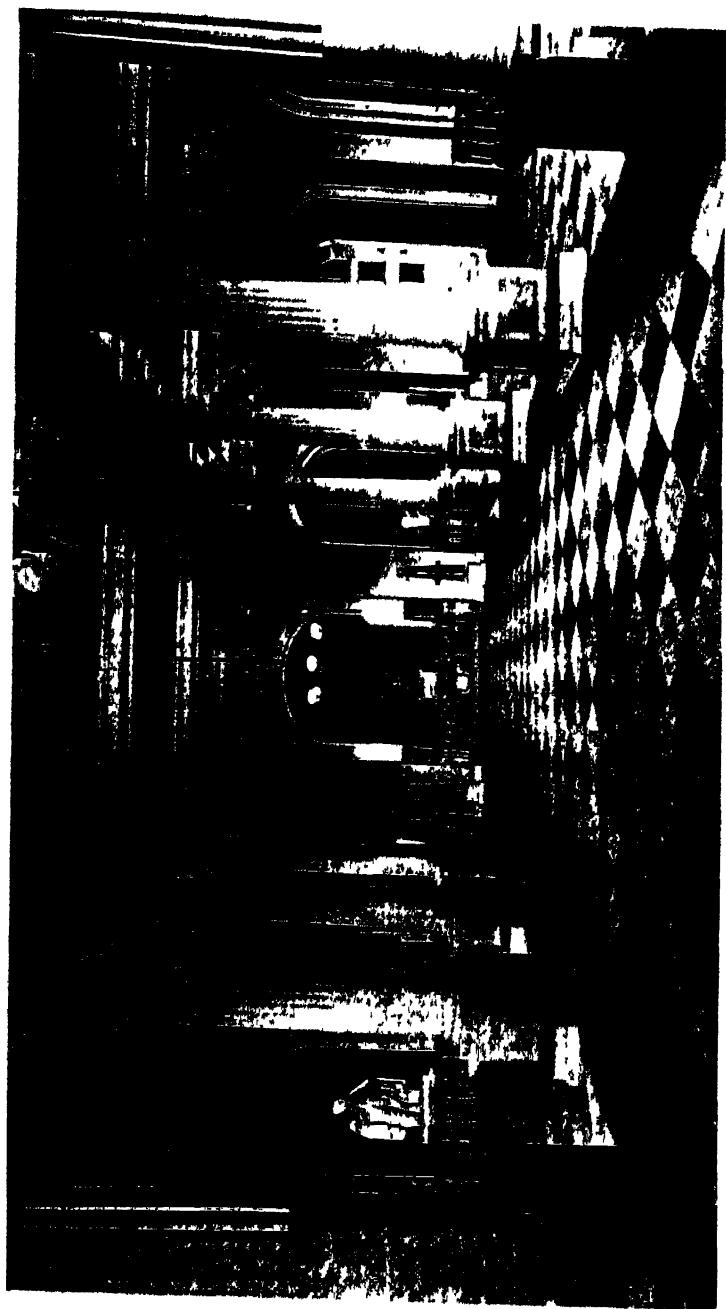
Next, 1809, — the gaps in our record filled with professional work of which no distinct trace remains to us, — came the new church in Federal Street, built for Dr. Channing's society, and, as here the architect made a new departure and introduced the Gothic style for the first time, a lively interest was excited in the work. It was called the first building of pure Saxon-Gothic architecture in Boston. The spire, however, has not been considered a success.

The year 1810 saw the erection of a long row of private dwelling-houses on "the Common," or what is now Tremont Street. These extended between West and Mason streets, where a few of them are still standing, although much altered in appearance by their adaptation to business purposes. With their fine view of the broad green spaces of the Common opposite and its lofty trees, these houses were favorite residences in their day, and, probably from the columns supporting the balcony along the front, the block received the name of Colonnade Row.

The court-house for the county of Suffolk was also built in 1810, of hammered granite, on the lot in School Street from which the Latin School-house had been removed, and where the City Hall now stands. It was the traditional site of the house of Isaac Johnson, the early settler of Boston. Long familiar to many as "the old Suffolk Court-house," it







DORIC HALL, STATE HOUSE, BOSTON



is even more intimately connected with the history of the city government than with the county, having been for many years, and during all the latter part of its existence, the Boston City Hall. The county was provided with new quarters in 1836; and in 1862, when the present City Hall was contemplated, the old building was destroyed to make room for it, as no location so desirable could be found for the increased accommodations which the growth of the city required.

From 1812 to 1814 Mr. Bulfinch built another courthouse for the county of Middlesex, which is standing in East Cambridge to-day. It was enlarged in 1848 by Mr. Ammi B. Young, architect of the Custom House in Boston, and has received serious alterations, I am told, since that date. Although the whole design has the character of his work, it is now impossible to determine with accuracy what belongs to the original plan.

At the intersection of Bedford and Summer streets, in Boston, was a triangular piece of ground to which the name of Church Green had been very early applied. Here stood the meeting-house of the New South society, and here in 1814, when a new structure was desired under the ministry of the Rev. Mr. Thacher, Mr. Bulfinch built what seems to have been universally considered the most beautiful of all his churches.<sup>1</sup>

Departing from the usual custom, he made the ground-plan octagonal, and a portico, with four Doric columns,

<sup>1</sup> In Shurtleff's *Topographical and Historical Description of Boston* occurs this sentence, following an account of the earliest grant of land to the New South society :—

"To this religious society the town afterwards gave an additional piece of land, with a very cautious condition (after the prudent manner of Mr. Bulfinch, the noted Selectman); and upon these lots stood the octagonal stone building which in the year 1868 was removed for the accommodation of business."

ornamented the front. The building was of hammered Chelmsford granite, and it is said to have owed part of its reputation to its fine masonry. A lofty and graceful spire crowned the work, rising to one hundred and ninety feet from the foundation. Every part of the church, within and without, was in harmony with the beauty and finish of the design as a whole. The mahogany pulpit has been described, as of remarkable elegance. Soon after the completion of the church a description of it appeared, from which we quote: "Inside of the house the ceiling is supported by four Ionic columns, connected above their entablature by four arches of moderate elevation; in the angles pendentives or fans rise to form a circular flat ceiling, decorated with a centre flower; between the arches and the walls are groins springing from the cornice, supported by Ionic pilasters between the windows. The galleries rest upon small columns, and are finished in front with balustrades."

There could have been no more lovely situation for a church in the town, judging from the old descriptions. The ground was high and level, and commanded in early times an open view over the beautiful harbor. Summer Street was adorned with lofty shade-trees. The church remained for many years an object of pride to the parish, and was considered by all who saw it one of the chief architectural ornaments of the city. On the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of its dedication, the pastor said in reviewing that earlier period: "Comparatively speaking, ~~there was then no more beautiful, no more costly, no more appropriately designed and appointed structure within the limits of the town or of the Commonwealth. Is there one which, on the whole, surpasses it to-day?~~"

The New South Church was taken down in 1868.

My father has stated that in its internal structure especial attention was paid to facility of hearing and speaking, on account of the delicate health of the pastor, Rev. Samuel C. Thacher. With this view, a flat ceiling was introduced, instead of the dome, which the form of the building would have rendered suitable.

University Hall, at Harvard College, was built in 1814, of hammered stone. It occupies a prominent place in the middle of the College Yard, standing at the intersection of the two avenues leading from the main gateways. It contained originally the College Chapel and public tables, or commons. Many will recall the queer little high gallery of the old chapel, which I remember seeing used on occasions when the newer Appleton Chapel was closed for repairs. I recollect especially an intensely warm summer afternoon when our beloved Dr. Andrew Peabody preached one of his noble baccalaureate sermons to the surging crowd of graduates and their friends, the fair young girls in light dresses, that filled the old Chapel to its utmost capacity. The interior of University Hall has been much altered, although the end rooms remain as they were; the President's office is still there; and the original stone staircases may be seen, supported by the masonry of the walls. The Chapel has been divided into two stories, and cut up into several rooms. One of these is now used for Faculty meetings, and the plan is under consideration of restoring the Chapel to its old proportions, in order to provide a more spacious hall for this purpose.

University Hall was originally built with an open colonnade or piazza along its western front.

In 1816, during the pastorate of the Rev. Nathaniel Thayer at the First Church in Lancaster, Massachusetts, Mr. Bulfinch built a new brick church for that society,



which is still standing, and is, I believe, considered to be the best of his church edifices remaining. Resembling the old Cathedral and the New North in having a cupola without a spire, in this instance made elaborate by a circle of fluted Ionic columns and festooned drapery, it differs from them both in the addition of an arcaded portico. The interior is characterized by much lightness and grace, with an open balustrade for the gallery front, often a feature of his interiors.

This church contains also a pulpit which is much admired and considered a great curiosity, being the only one of the kind that is known to be existing, except a copy made from it for the church in Eliot Square, Roxbury. It is reached only by a staircase ascending outside the auditorium, and the preacher enters the pulpit through a doorway in the wall, as if stepping out upon a balcony. The staircase is now enclosed in a modern vestry.

A year or two later than this, in 1817-18, a brick building, for a combined chapel and library, was built for Andover Theological Seminary; and this brings us to the date of laying the corner-stone of the Massachusetts General Hospital, which, with the Somerville Asylum, must be left for another chapter.

Besides the architectural works enumerated here as belonging to these years, a number of others are known to have been by Charles Bulfinch, and most of them are included in his own list, given in the appendix. He built the Boylston Market, taken down not long since; the County Jail at Cambridge; an almshouse at Salem; enlarged Concert Hall, giving it a new interior; and built the following banks in Boston: the United States, Massachusetts, Boston, Mechanics', Union, with a bank building at Salem. Several insurance offices were built by him in Boston, the Suffolk,

New England, and Marine, with the interior of the Mutual; also a grammar school of stone, and two large brick school-houses in Boston; a meeting-house of wood at Pittsfield, now, as I understand, despoiled of its steeple and forming a part of the Maplewood Hotel; wooden meeting-houses at Taunton and Weymouth, the former still standing; with a number of private residences, and probably other works now unchronicled.

Among the private dwellings Mr. Bulfinch built was a detached mansion on Mount Vernon Street, just above Louisburg Square, which may still be seen, and which shows the same style of ornamentation he used upon the residences in the old Franklin Crescent.

Perhaps the finest of his private residences in Boston was the large mansion of the elder Mr. Joseph Coolidge, which once stood on Bowdoin Street and must have been an elegant example of his style. He is said to have been famous for his staircases, and the one here was particularly handsome. Mr. Bowditch, in his reminiscences, mentions this mansion and its grounds, saying that they altogether formed one of the most beautiful residences which existed in the town.

The mansion designed for Mr. Joseph Barrell, at Charlestown, will be hereafter described.

The position which Charles Bulfinch now filled of chairman of the Board of Selectmen was similar in many respects to that occupied by the mayor of the city. He was charged with the first responsibility regarding the order, cleanliness, and economy of the town administration; with its health and safety; and also with the privilege of representing the town on occasions of state, and receiving its honored guests.

It is true that the executive power was divided among several boards, each claiming independence of the other, each possessing a qualified control in respect of expenditures, and with their respective authorities somewhat loosely defined. It is easy to believe, as Mr. Quincy says, that, in an administration thus constituted, petty jealousies, rivalry, and collisions were occasionally to be expected.

Of this period of Mr. Bulfinch's life, covering, in all his relations to the administration of town affairs, between twenty and thirty years, his son Thomas wrote: —

"It would require a long detail to enumerate the works of public improvement by which the crooked were made straight, and the rough places smooth, under his influence, during this long period of the history of our city. In the course of these improvements he necessarily was often brought into collision with individuals whose interests were to be made to yield to the public exigency. In all instances these collisions were dealt with in such a mild and reasonable spirit as to allay to a great degree the irritation which arose, and in many cases to convert into warm friends those who at first met him in the most hostile spirit.

"He was always incredulous, it is said, of tales of scandal, or, if forced to admit the facts, ingenious in explaining them away, or reconciling them with the innocence, or at least the good intentions, of the accused."

Another son, Greenleaf, tells us, regarding his father's connection with the improvements in the town: —

"It is hard to conceive, in the present narrow and crowded appearance of the thoroughfares of Boston, that the work of widening them has been going on since the beginning of the present century, but many can remember the time when they were much more incommoded by projecting corners of houses, and other obstructions, than at

present. . . . I have heard that on one occasion, when the removal of some protruding building had been ordered, and a ladder raised to begin the work, the owner appeared above, armed with a musket, and threatened to shoot the first who should dare to climb. His object was to frighten off the workmen ; but Mr. Bulfinch, who probably knew that the man was not as valiant as he appeared, mounted the ladder himself, and thus dispelled the terror."

The incident that Mr. Quincy relates of this period, in his "Municipal History of Boston," may be familiar through repetition, but ought not to be omitted : —

"No farther attempt to change the town organization occurred until 1815, when Charles Bulfinch, who had been chairman of the Board of Selectmen and Superintendent of Police ever since the year 1800, and two other efficient members of that board, were not reelected. The circumstance was a subject of very general surprise and regret. Every elected member of the Board of Selectmen immediately resigned, and on a second trial Mr. Bulfinch and the other members of the board of the preceding year were reinstated by decided majorities.

"Few men," adds Mr. Quincy in a biographical note, "deserve to be held by the citizens of Boston in more grateful remembrance than Charles Bulfinch. . . . During the many years he presided over the town government, he improved its finances, executed the laws with firmness, and was distinguished for gentleness and urbanity of manners, integrity and purity of character."

A new order of things was not, however, far off. The difficulty of conducting municipal affairs under the form of town government, with so large a population, became more and more evident, and four years after Mr. Bulfinch left the Board of Selectmen we find the first city government organized, with Mr. John Phillips for mayor.

The list of Selectmen, as given in the Boston Directory for 1800, is as follows: Charles Bulfinch, David Tilden, Russell Sturgis, Joseph Howard, Ebenezer Hancock, William Porter, William Sherburne, John Tileston, Ebenezer Oliver. The chamber for their meetings was in Faneuil Hall.

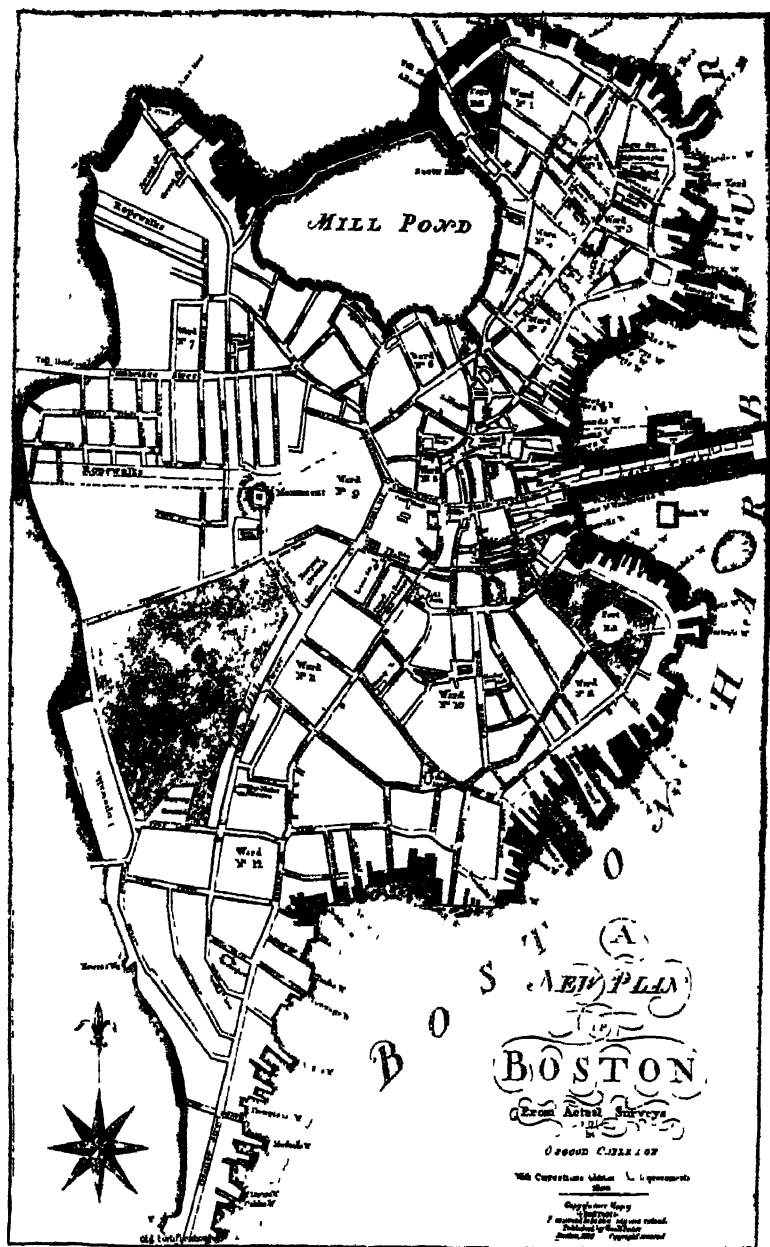
Among my grandfather's papers we have found a copy of the "By-laws and Orders of the Town of Boston," in 1801, together with sundry rules and regulations of the Board of Health, and certain laws of the Commonwealth relating to Town affairs. It is a small pamphlet, in gray paper covers, and was printed by Manning & Loring, No. 2 Cornhill. The first page contains an advertisement signed by Charles Bulfinch, Superintendent of Police, explaining that this collection is printed by order of the town, and is to be distributed for general information, in order that no one may plead ignorance in future. As it is the duty of the subscriber to see these laws properly executed, he calls upon the grand jurors of the county, the town officers and constables, and upon the inhabitants at large, to give information of the breach of any and every one of them. He engages that "no exertion shall be wanting on his part, to maintain that good order and government, so essential to the well-being, the safety and happiness of the inhabitants of this metropolis."

With the tenor of many of these regulations we are already familiar through the various reprints of early town documents in New England. They take us back, as may be imagined, to quite a different scene and state of affairs from the Boston of to-day.

It was then considered sufficient, for instance, when drains were opened in the streets, to mark the locality after dark by a lantern lighted "until midnight."







FAC-SIMILE OF A MAP OF BOSTON IN THE YEAR 1800





Oystermen were required, when they opened their wares in any of the streets, lanes, or alleys, to put the shells into their bag, wheelbarrow, or other vehicle, and carry them off to places specially appointed by the Selectmen for piling oyster-shells.

Wood being the only fuel used, we find it ordered that it shall not be left in the streets after dark; and there are also laws to prevent fraud in the sale of wood and bark, with acts regulating the size of charcoal baskets, which "should be well heaped and also sealed by the sealer of the town or district."

Whoever should be found guilty of kicking football or throwing stones or snow-balls in the streets should forfeit and pay the sum of *fifty cents* for each offence.

The same penalty was attached to gambling in the streets, or market-places, or on the wharves; but the one who fired a gun, except in self-defence, was obliged to pay the sum of one dollar; and squibs, serpents, or other fire-works required a license, or else entailed a fine of four dollars.

We find the following relating to driving on the Lord's day:—

"And whereas great dangers and disturbances arise from chariots, chaises and other carriages on the Lord's day, as the inhabitants are going to, or returning from, the several houses of public worship in this town, and also while they are assembled in them for public worship, being driven with great rapidity;

"*Therefore it is ordered*, That no chariot, chaise or other carriage, shall at such times be driven at a greater rate than a walk, or moderate foot pace, on penalty of *Two Dollars* for each offence, to be paid by the person driving, or if he be a servant, and unable to pay the same, by the master or mistress of such servant.

“And no horse, mare or gelding, shall hereafter be rode, drove, or led into the Common, or to any pond or any part of the sea, or to any other usual *public* place for washing or watering on the Lord’s day; on pain that the rider, driver or leader thereof shall forfeit and pay the sum of *Two Dollars* for every offence.”

In addition to the above, we read that it was further enacted —

“That no owner or driver of any hackney carriage belonging to the town of Boston, shall drive said hackney carriage into or from said town on the Lord’s day, without first having obtained a certificate of permission from some Justice of the Peace within said town for himself and each and every passenger by him so carried, on the pain and penalty of forfeiting his license for setting up, keeping and driving said hackney carriage, for the term of three years next after committing such offence.”

The laws to secure the town from damage by fire were, of course, exceedingly strict : public buildings were required to be built of stone or brick, with roofs of incombustible material, and likewise all distilleries and livery stables ; while dwelling-houses were to have one of the largest sides, or else the two ends, of brick or stone.

Chimney-sweepers were to be licensed and to wear badges. Their wages were to be fixed from time to time by the Selectmen, and no inhabitant could pay a higher rate, or employ any person, excepting his own servant, to sweep his chimney, other than those who were licensed.

“Lighted segars” were forbidden upon the streets, and people were prohibited from leaving their pastures or orchards lying open where there might be a well uncovered.

The act for regulating lamps had been passed in 1773, and was made perpetual in 1797, as stated here. It begins as follows : —

"Whereas the enlightening of streets, lanes, alleys and passage ways in large and populous towns, by lamps hung up in the night time, is not only ornamental, but very advantageous to all such persons as have occasion to pass in and through the same about their lawful business, and tend greatly for the safety and preservation of the inhabitants, by the discovery and prevention of fires, burglaries, robberies, thefts and other lesser breaches of the Peace: Be it therefore enacted by the Governor, Council and House of Representatives," etc.

The orders following relate to the hiring of persons to set up and care for the lamps: —

"And that whereas many of the inhabitants of the said town of Boston have, by a generous subscription, raised a sum of money sufficient for purchasing such a number of lamps as will be necessary for illuminating the streets, &c. in that metropolis; and as the destroying or breaking the same will not only be injurious to the encouragers of so laudable a design, but to the public in general: Be it therefore further enacted."

Here follow injunctions against breaking or extinguishing lamps, doing damage to posts, etc.: —

"Every person so offending therein to be tried by any of his Majesty's Courts of General Sessions of the Peace, and to pay the sum of Twenty Pounds, for each act of wilful destruction, and if accidentally liable, so much as in the opinion of the Selectmen should be necessary for repairs."

All the pumps in the town were to be inspected four times a year by the police, and kept in good condition for extinguishing a fire.

A number of persons were to be licensed as funeral porters, the Selectmen fixing their rate of wages; and no person whatsoever beside should presume to act as a funeral

porter, or be employed by any inhabitant, nor should such inhabitant pay more than the appointed rate. The penalty attached to such violations of the law was *four dollars*.

The tolling of bells we find also provided for, — not more than two strokes in a minute, on penalty of a two-dollar fine.

Among the rules of the Board of Health we notice that “no fresh fish shall be sold or kept in any stall, fish-box or other house within the town, except such stall, fish-box or other house stands over the salt water.”

There was then quite a herd of cattle on the Common, owned by different proprietors, with “two or more Bulls” permitted by the town to go at large there all summer. These alarming occupants must have seriously impaired the enjoyment of a part of the population in strolling over the grassy acres.

An act for employing and providing for the poor, passed in 1735 and confirmed in 1789, begins as follows : —

“Whereas the town of Boston is grown considerably populous, and the idle and poor much increased among them, and the laws now in force relating to them not so suitable to the circumstances of the said town, which are different from those of the other towns in the province, Therefore,” etc., etc.

The Overseers of the Poor are here appointed, with workhouse maintenance and inspection, etc., and we read : “Be it further enacted, That where persons bring up their children in such gross ignorance, that they do not know, or are not able to distinguish the alphabet or twenty-four letters at the age of six years, in such case the Overseers of the Poor are hereby impowered and directed to put or bind out into good families, such children, for a decent and Christian education, as when parents are indigent and rated

nothing to the public taxes ; unless the children are judged incapable, through some inevitable infirmity."

A kind human feeling speaks in the law to prohibit forestalling and engrossing of provisions, with which we close our extracts from these old records : —

*"It is hereby ordered,* That no huckster or other person whatsoever dwelling or residing within this town, shall, by himself or others, buy, contract or bargain for any sort of grain, meal, butter, fowls, mutton, veal, pork, eggs, or any other sort of provision, while it is bringing from the entrance of the town, by any avenue, to the market place, unless for his or her own family use or consumption, before two of the clock in the afternoon, on penalty of forfeiting and paying *Five Dollars* for every such offence. . . .

*"And to the intent to discourage,* as far as may be, the injurious practice, too frequent among butchers and others, of forestalling the market, by buying up in the country and on the road to town, poultry and other provisions, in order to sell and utter them again at advanced prices :

*"It is hereby further ordered,* That every person offending herein, and convicted of the same, shall never hereafter be permitted to hire or hold any stand in the market place in this town.

*"And all persons having the least regard to justice and to the poor inhabitants of this town, are requested to give information against every such offender to the Selectmen, that he or she may be brought to condign punishment, and for which offence the Selectmen are hereby directed vigorously to prosecute every offender, at the court or courts proper to try the same."*

I find the following statement in my grandfather's handwriting concerning the changes and improvements made in Boston during his administration of its affairs, and in the

years immediately succeeding. It was probably written near 1840 : —

C. Bulfinch was a junior member of the board of Selectmen from 1789 to 1793 ; he was Chairman from 1797 to 1818, 21 years, during which time he was Superintendent of Police, salary \$600, till the two last years, when it was raised to \$1,000.

By his exertions a law of the State was obtained, giving power to the Selectmen to widen streets and regulate pavements, another to establish the Municipal Court. — In consequence of these points

Congress Street was opened at entrance on State Street.

The West end of Court street widened, lead<sup>s</sup> to Bowdoin Square.

The lower part of State street and Merchants Row and Back street widened.

Hanover street and Beacon street, by Gov. Hancock's, — and High street, do.

Exchange street widened throughout.

New Cornhill opened, leading from Tremont street to Dock Square.

Part of Avon street widened after a fire.

Charles street laid out and filled over the marsh.

West mall formed and planted.

The Neck lands laid out in streets and squares.

The Mill pond laid out in streets.

South Boston laid into streets.

All streets regulated with sidewalks, wherever new paved.

Faneuil Hall building enlarged to four times its original size.

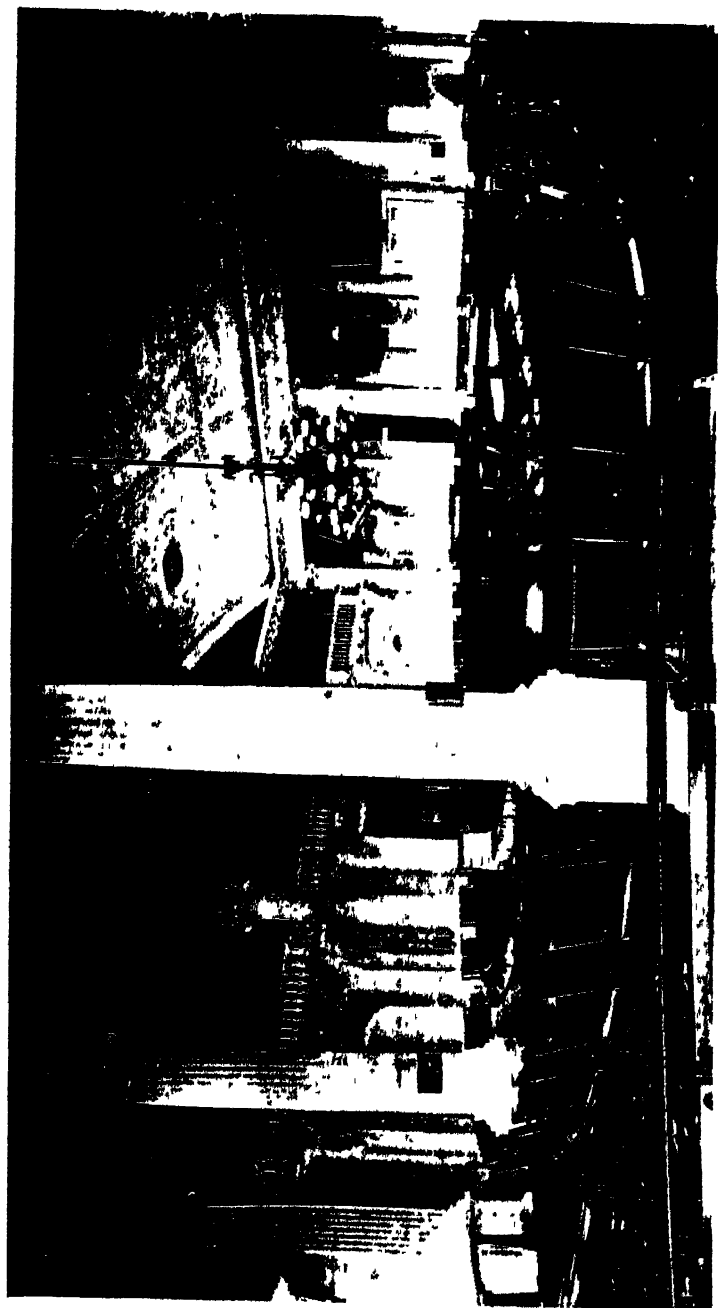
Almshouse in Leverett street built.

Stone Court house, now *City Hall*, built.









SENATE CHAMBER, STATE HOUSE, BOSTON



Derne street and Belknap street opened, and part of Batterymarch street.

All these improvements were made by the Town and paid for, so that when C. B. was invited to Washington, to rebuild the Capitol, the debt of the Town was only Fourteen thousand dollars.<sup>1</sup> Population in 1818, 40,000.

Besides these public improvements, others were made during the same period by the State and companies of individuals : —

The State house built, from plans of C. B.

West Boston Bridge.

Canal Bridge, so called, from Leverett Street.

Front Street and South Boston bridge.

Boylston market.

Broad street and India wharf.

Central wharf.

The General Hospital from plans by C. B.

Franklin place, Colonnade row, Park street.

The increase of the population and of the wealth of the Citizens has enabled the City authorities to make improvements on a more extended scale, viz. :

The Quincy market and streets adjacent, new court house, Jail in Leverett street, almshouse and other buildings at South Boston.

Tremont street continued over the flats to Roxbury.

Several streets widened.

<sup>1</sup> The Auditor's Monthly Report for January 1, 1895, gives the following figures regarding the debt of the city of Boston at the present time : —

City debt . . . . .	\$37,210,937.58
County debt . . . . .	3,682,000.00
Cochituate water debt . . . . .	17,761,273.98
Total . . . . .	<u>\$58,654,211.56</u>

being the gross debt, December 31, 1894.

The population in 1890 was 448,477.

Portions of Washington, Portland and Friend streets, Elm street and others.

These undertakings are important improvements and add to the convenience and beauty of the City, but they have occasioned a debt of One million, six hundred Thousand dollars ; the interest of which is more than the whole annual tax of 1818.

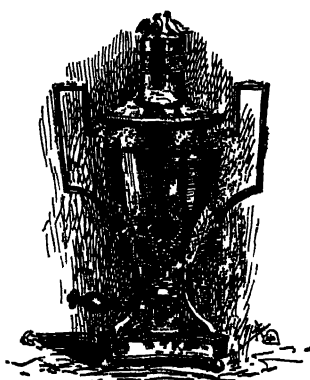
Since the Incorporation of the City the following important improvements have been made by private companies :

The Western Avenue to Brooklyne.

Commercial street with the noble wharfs projecting from it.

Tremont and several other large Hotels.

The South Cove land, — 3 Railroad depots, Louisbourg and Pemberton squares.



## CHAPTER VI

### MADAM BULFINCH'S LETTERS

1798 - 1808

Then I saw in my dream, they went very lovingly on together, and had sweet discourse of all things that had happened to them in their pilgrimage ; and thus Christian began : " My honoured and well-beloved brother Faithful, I am glad that I have overtaken you, and that God has so tempered our spirits that we can walk as companions in this so pleasant a path."

*The Pilgrim's Progress.*



WE return now to consider Mr. Bulfinch's domestic life during the years marked by so many changes in the outward appearance and development of the town.

It is not easy to trace the different homes of the family through the changes brought about by their varying fortunes, and perhaps impossible to determine them with exactness.

The Boston Directory, published then at irregular intervals, has been of much

assistance in confirming and filling out the family traditions, and some help has been found in the occasional contribu-

tions of old residents to the "Boston Transcript," when the ever-interesting subject of early families and old mansions has led them to give their recollections to the public.

These recollections, however, may be sometimes misleading, though they contain so much of value. Writers may seem to contradict each other's statements when they are only describing different periods, for the list of residents in a particular locality, which might be accurate for one date, would often need to be altered for a date even slightly earlier or later. Comparing and sifting the different traditions, we can learn at least a few particulars as to Charles Bulfinch's places of abode.

At the time of his wife's last entry in her note-book, the household had already made two changes since the Marlborough or Washington Street days. The first, immediately after their loss of fortune, was to the "small dwelling," thought to be on Middlecott Street; and the second was to the friendly home of George and Anna Storer, where the two families combined to live under one roof, lessening in this way their expenses, and grateful for each other's sympathy and society in their narrowed prospects. This house seems to have been on Southac's Court, the early name for Howard Street, and may have been the quaint old wooden building with many gables that is described as standing there, on the corner of Court Street, and has been associated with the Bulfinch name. The Storers had no children of their own, and the little ones in their brother's family must have been heartily welcomed by such a delightful friend and companion of childhood as their dear "Uncle Storer," whose praises have been told to this day, with many delightful anecdotes, by those who were fortunate enough to know him in their early years.

Referring again to the journal, we find the following entries:—

"January 5th, 1799. On this day was born another son, who was permitted to remain with us but eight weeks when a severe illness of the same kind which was fatal to his little brothers seiz'd him, and on the 3rd day of March remov'd him to that state where sorrows cannot come and where the weary are at rest. As we advance in life all pleasures unconnected with our families are insipid. These are in proportion more valuable, our children are dearer, *their* loss sinks deeper on the mind, yet I will still submit as well as I can to the dispensations of providence. The former wounds are opened; I will assuage their smart by the healing aids of reason and religion. I am now rich in three fine children. How *many* are without even one! For the last two years retir'd from the gay world, we have liv'd to ourselves and our dearest connections. Calm, serene days of social and domestic employment have not been interrupted till this event. . . . Few people even in prosperity have enjoy'd more real happiness than we in our little circle. We therefore must not repine. . . .

"While attending my poor infant, who lay dangerously sick, on the first day of March, at the chill hour of day-break, when he had fallen into a peaceful slumber, my pencil almost involuntarily traced the following lines:—

Ah cold, ungentle, early Spring,  
Blast not my little tender flower ;  
Thy genial influence hither bring  
And banish winter's unpropitious power.  
Chilled by the rigors of this sterner reign,  
Assume thy smiles, my blossom blooms again.

Alas! Spring regarded not my invocation, for

Cold was the morn, my infant boy  
Still languish'd in his mother's arms,  
Sorrow usurp'd the place of joy  
And fill'd my fond heart with its sad alarms.



In vain I call'd the genial breath of Spring,  
Death aim'd its baneful shaft, and left its keenest sting.

"August 10th, 1799. Left the hospitable mansion of our dear Brother and Sister Storer to occupy a small neat house in their neighborhood, Providence so far favouring the industry of my Husband as to enable us to support our family separately."

This removal is thought to have been to Middlecott Street again, but their tarry here was of short duration, for her husband's brightening prospects enabled him very soon to establish his family more permanently. Bulfinch Street was laid out soon after the building of the State House, and received its name perhaps partly in honor of the architect as well as from its marking the old boundary of his family estate. Bulfinch Place connected it then, as it does to-day, with Middlecott, the present Bowdoin Street, and here on Bulfinch Place Mr. Bulfinch built the house which for a number of years was the family home. It is described as a large brick house, painted white, with a very handsome spiral staircase and a good-sized garden in the rear. It is believed to have been the one afterwards owned by the Waterston family, and enlarged into the apartment house now called by that name. Although part of the garden was taken for the extension of the building, one of the old mulberry trees that used to be there still remains. This house was their home from 1800 to 1815, and following Mr. Bulfinch's name in the Directory appear the words, "Superintendent of police."

Allusion is made to their new home in the following entry:—

"Jan. 23, 1800. . . . At last we find ourselves established in a comfortable house, with a moderate income, in which state we hope to remain for several years, as the

house is agreed for, and we have every reason to expect a resting place at least for that time.

"My dear Sister and her Husband [have] settled in the eastern country, after having suffer'd from loss of children and fortune more than myself."

A seventh son was born this year, who was named for her husband's good and faithful friend, George Storer.

The following note to Mr. Bulfinch from President Jefferson, introducing a young Southern friend, belongs to this time :—

WASHINGTON, July 1, 1802.

SIR, — The bearer hereof, Mr. Mills, a native of South Carolina, has passed some years at this place as a student in architecture. He is now setting out on a journey through the states to see what is worth seeing in that line in each state. He will visit Boston with the same view, and knowing your taste for the art, I take the liberty of recommending him to your notice, and of asking for him whatever information on the subject may be useful to his views while in Boston.

Accept assurances of my esteem and respect.

TH. JEFFERSON.

The year 1802 was marked by the death of the architect's father, Dr. Thomas Bulfinch, who had for some two years past been in feeble health and withdrawn from the active life of his profession. Tradition says that he was found dead, as peaceful as if asleep, in the same large old-fashioned armchair where Madam Grizzell Apthorp, his wife's mother, had also breathed her last.

An interesting sermon in manuscript remains, preached on the death of Dr. Bulfinch, from the text, "The beloved physician," evidently by Dr. Freeman, at the King's Chapel,

although the name of the writer is not attached. Recognizing the universal wish to be beloved, the writer considers the chief causes from which affection springs, with especial reference to the character of the good physician. He describes the noble and wise traits of the ideal physician, who is broad in culture, gentle in manner, and "enters the chamber of the sick like the angel of health, with a smile of benignity on his countenance," these several features being taken, as he says, from the friend who has gone, and he dwells particularly upon the sweetness and mildness of his temper. "In conversing with him we were under no apprehension of being hurt with severe remarks or harsh speeches." This trait is not confined to polished circles, and may exist in a forest as well as in a city; "when, however, it is graced with that courtesy which is the effect of a liberal education and frequent intercourse with refined society, it becomes still more lovely."

Dr. Bulfinch's widow continued until her death, thirteen years later, an inmate of her youngest daughter's family at the old homestead, where she evidently received not only the honor due as a matter of course to her age and position, but a remarkable degree of attention from Mr. Coolidge and his household. Her daughter Elizabeth admired and revered her mother's strong qualities of mind and heart, and was her devoted companion. As a young girl, Charles had called her "a charming scribe for mamma," and now, when advancing years impaired the latter's eyesight, she became her amanuensis again, and often preserved for herself and her brother and sister copies of their mother's letters.

We owe much to this affectionate habit, for it is in this way that we can now enter, as it were, the door of the mansion in Bowdoin Square, and become acquainted in

some degree with the life of the family, also catching a glimpse of Charles Bulfinch's occupations and contemporary events in the town.

A small water-color portrait of Madam Bulfinch gives us an idea of her appearance at this time. She has a *petite*, erect figure, and wears a high, white cap with mourning band. Her countenance is seen in profile. It bears a mild expression, but there is much character in the delicately cut features, and a certain charm in the slightly *retroussé* nose.

The first letter we have from her belongs to the year 1803, when she opened a correspondence with her brother, Dr. East Apthorp, and some of the other relations in England. Dr. Apthorp, well known in the early history of the Episcopal Church in New England, had retired from his charge as the first rector of Christ Church in Cambridge, Massachusetts, probably — being a man of peace — on account of the belligerent attitude of the Puritan clergy around him, and had taken up his abode in England, where he filled the offices of vicar of Croydon and rector of St. Mary-le-bone and St. Pancras in London, with other rectories attached. He became prebend of Finsbury, and in later life retired wholly to Cambridge, where he had formerly lived as student and fellow of Jesus College. Here he was now passing his old age, cheered by the attentions of his wife and daughters and his own "happy and gladsome cast of piety," but suffering from the same affliction as his sister, — a partial loss of sight. An early letter from him is preserved, in which he addresses her as his "dear Sukey," and without doubt letters had from time to time been exchanged by the two.

The little English orphans will also be remembered, whom John Apthorp had left behind when he returned to his native land. They occasionally appear in the family

chronicles, at first as writing childish letters to their dear papa, and later as sending across the Atlantic a wedding gift to their half sister Hannah, — an illustrated Bible, in four volumes. It is to these nieces, known as Mrs. Wheelright and Mrs. Sarah Apthorp, that Madam Bulfinch addresses part of her correspondence, which also includes a few letters to Dr. Apthorp's daughters and one to her brother Thomas. Very few of these have dates, but we can conjecture the time with some accuracy from the allusions they contain.

TO DR. APTHORP.

[1803.]

MY DEAR BROTHER, — It is long, very long since I have receiv'd a line from you. Your last gave me an account of the death of our dear Sister Bayard, which I answer'd by the first opportunity. Some time after, I had to mourn the death of a much nearer and dearer relation in the Husband and friend; but as he had long suffer'd much sickness and debility, and his moral conduct and religious principles were such as to lead us to hope he is happy, myself and children have endeavor'd to support the loss with calm resignation to the will of Heaven. I desir'd my Son to give you an early account of his sickness and death, since which I have heard nothing from you. I think, had you receiv'd that letter, I should have had comfort and consolation from your pen. I am myself drawing fast towards the close of life, which I look forward to with anxious fear, not without a hope of a blessed immortality. My health is as good as I could expect, considering the constitutional weakness I have been always subject to. My situation is as it was when I wrote you last. I am in the mansion house with my youngest daughter. I look from

the window upon the houses of my other two children ; they call to see me every day, and when the weather is very fine and my limbs will permit, I visit them in return. My Son, tho' he has been unfortunate, is much respected ; he is president of the Selectmen, for which he receives a small salary. That, with his employments in the architectural line, enables him to support a very excellent wife and five children, tho' with economy, yet in a very pretty style. My daughter Storer is living genteely. She has an affectionate husband, they are perfectly happy together ; they have no children of their own, but have at present with them a widow Sister of Mr. Storer's that has one child.

I hear three of your Children are happily married. I hope they have children and you see them frequently. Great part of the pleasure of my life is deriv'd from three little creatures we have at home. The eldest of them, a girl about six, is particularly pleasing ; when the school hours are over, she reads, she sews, she knits, she chats with her Grandmama, and often asks questions which I find myself unable to answer. She is fair, has fine blue eyes, a pretty mouth and a lovely dimple in her right cheek. Now, my dear Brother, I have brought you home among us by giving you an account of my own immediate concerns. Indeed, I have no others, for, except going to see my children and occasionally to church, I never leave home, therefore know not anything that is passing abroad. As a people we are bless'd with health, peace, and plenty. Make my most affectionate regards to Mrs. Apthorp, and your young folks ; if any of them can find leisure and inclination to indulge me with a few lines respecting yourself and family situation, I shall be much gratified. I wish also to have some account of my Brother Thomas and his family, Major B. and his family, people that I once knew

and dearly loved, but of whom I hear nothing more now than if they were of another world. Christmas draws near. I wish you all the tranquil pleasures which that season generally brings with it, also a happy New Year, the time I suppose when the children and grandchildren assemble around you. I should admire to make one of the interesting party.

I have nothing more to add, but repeat my good wishes to yourself and Mrs. A. I am, with esteem and friendship, your and her Affectionate Sister.

Let me know particularly how your sight is now.

TO MR. WHEELWRIGHT.

MY DEAR SIR, — I should be exceedingly obliged if you will forward the enclos'd to my Brother, Dr. Apthorp, as I have written him several times, but not receiving an answer, rather suppose my letters have not reached him.

My best love to Mrs. W. and her young family. If either of them could find leisure to give me an account of her own health and their improvements (even their names and ages) it would be highly interesting and gratifying to your Affectionate Aunt.

TO MRS. WHEELWRIGHT.

[1804.]

MY DEAR NIECE, — I take the earliest opportunity to thank you for your charming letter, in which you so kindly introduce me to every branch of your family, and rejoice with you that your health is such that you can, not only superintend their education, but attend them in their first entrance into life, as in my opinion the mother is the most suitable person, and the mutual affection and confidence that subsists between Mother and Child must be such as to

render them always happy in the company of each other. I have the pleasure to inform you your Sisters are well and happy. Their Education were so good and their minds so well form'd that they have been enabled to bear every change of life with a dignity and cheerfulness that makes them much respected and beloved. Sister H. is remarkably pleasant. She has good health and is very active, bringing up a fine family of children, five in number. The eldest is a girl of fifteen years old and begins to be very useful to her mother. Frances has spent the winter with her sister. She is of a mild, retir'd disposition, but enjoys life notwithstanding her disappointments. She has two children. The youngest, a very sweet little girl, is with her. However, they are able to give you a better account of themselves than I can do.

I hear your good Gentleman is in the Military line. I hope he has not been call'd into action, as I suppose long before this your hopes or fears have been realiz'd. We are quiet and happy, and talk of war as a thing at a distance, therefore without any apprehensions for ourselves, but interested for our friends concern'd. Our papers are fill'd with Buonaparte's intentions and exploits. Whether he will or will not invade England is still with us a doubtful point. He has a Brother upon the Continent that has married a very fine young woman at the Southward, far distant from us. I hope they will remain there, as they affect French manners which we, in our part of the world, are very little accustom'd to. Whether he has come as an inhabitant, or only to reconnoitre the country, we know not. Perhaps it may depend upon the success of his Brother.

My health is tolerable, perhaps as good as I ought to expect it to be at my time of life. My next birthday will bring round my seventieth year.



TO DR. APTHORP.

[1804.]

MY DEAR BROTHER, — Another letter from my Sister, you will say, and perhaps be surpriz'd at receiving it so soon, but I was so truly gratify'd by the pleasing information yours contain'd, of your being all well and happy, that I determin'd to acknowledge it by the very earliest opportunity. The correspondence I have so lately renew'd I am determin'd shall not be dropp'd on my side, while I am able to dictate, as I have two daughters, either of whom are ready to write for me. You have a number able, and I will suppose quite willing to oblige me in return. My life, tho' as comfortable as I could expect it to be, admits of but little variety. You cannot imagine how delighted I am with accounts of the few friends I have at a distance. I have nothing new to inform you of. The whole conversation here is about Buonaparte and the invasion of England, which we flatter ourselves tho' he may attempt, he will never be able to accomplish.

I hope your situation renders you secure even from any fears upon the subject. We remain in the enjoyment of health, peace and plenty, and the Town of Boston is so grown you would scarce know it for your native place; almost every spot of land is cover'd with brick buildings, and the paved streets and hackney coaches make us very noisy. The old mansion house in State Street is converted into a Bank, the outside handsomely ornamented. A large and elegant State house is built near the Common, both the building and situation are the admiration of strangers. The old Town house, neatly fitted up and divided into Shops and Stores, where [are] all the varieties of Manufactures from different parts of the world, to draw the attention of the Young and the gay. We have a spacious Alms

*Susan Apthorp Bulfinch (mother of Charles Bulfinch)*







house, built at New Boston, which you will recollect by the name of Barton's point, the old Alms house taken down, and a number of handsome houses placed upon the land. The Common still remains free, and we hope always will, as we really begin to be crowded. The three Churches remain as they were; several new Meeting houses are just completed at the North End. On the Spot where [stood] old Dr. Eliott's store, his son, a very worthy Man, supplies his place. I have given you a description of things here. Our families are as when I wrote last. Your letter gives me a most charming idea of yours; every one that has the pleasure of knowing them with whom we have been acquainted, give us most pleasing accounts of the economy and government of it. Our old friend Mr. H. Lloyd of respectable Memory, once said, in describing it to me, the happy chearfulness that reign'd throughout made him feel when visiting you as if he was in Paradise. Your good Lady must not charge me with flattery. I only repeat what I have heard others say. I hope she enjoys health, and that her little daughter will be spar'd to be long a comfort to her. The delicate little painting of Menelaus and Paris we were much pleas'd with.

My eldest granddaughter Susan B. has made some attempts, under her mother's inspection. If she is not too diffident, I shall prevail on her to give me some trifle to enclose. Her Cousins must consider it as the production of a Child. She is untaught, but I wish to return something to show how much I admire the performance and attention of my Niece.

From my Sister's pen I cannot expect to be favor'd, as she must have many Avocations, but when either of my Nieces have leisure to let me know how you all are, they will gratify me by a few lines. My sincerest love, &c. &c.

· TO MRS. WHEELWRIGHT.

[1804.]

MY DEAR NIECE, — It gives me pleasure by your letters and every other account, to find how very pleasing your situation in life is. The kind attentions of a good Husband and the dutiful affection of such Children to a person of your domestic turn must be a source of the greatest happiness and comfort. Your precaution in leaving a letter prepar'd lest a vessel should sail before your return from your excursion is a trait of Character so congenial with my own that I cannot but admire it. I am now writing the 10th of October, tho' uncertain when an opportunity may offer, as my time of life and state of health does not admit any delay, and it has always been a rule with me never to burden to-morrow with more than its necessary business.

Our little folks are in the country, about seven miles from town, and as the weather in general has been cool and pleasant, I have often visited them. We go over the Neck, and return by W. B. bridge, which makes the whole ride twelve miles. The variety of the country is beautiful, the roads are good, and the exercise I believe has in a great measure contributed to keep me as well as I am. My daughter S., who has very delicate health, has pass'd two months in M. in Connecticut, about 120 miles from B. To me it appears as a great distance, but as there are regular stages, and we have it in our power to exchange letters twice a week, and hope her health may be benefitted, I reconcile myself to the separation. Our summer has been healthy and fruitful, you may judge how much so when I assure you the common market price of very fine peaches has been nine pence the  $\frac{1}{2}$  peck; all other fruits and variety of vegetables, each excellent of their kind, have been sold

equally low. The poorest people among us get their full proportion of each. This is the season of plenty, and the Markets tempt us to be profuse in our entertainments. Indeed I may say, peace and plenty still remain in our borders.

We have melancholy accounts of storms in different parts of the Continent, and just now we have a tremendous one here. It commenc'd yesterday morning, and now, at 12 o'clk, it seems to be abating. Steeples of churches are blown off to a considerable distance, large trees torn up by the roots, of which we have a specimen in our own garden. We have one at least nine inches in diameter, and suppos'd fifty feet in length, lying prostrate, and one fine large weeping willow, not finding room eno' to spread itself on the ground, has fallen against the house, but done no other damage than breaking a few windows. (The trunk of this tree measures at least five feet diameter.) I have reach'd my seventieth year and do not recollect any storm equal to the present. I mention, my dear Niece, these little domestic occurrences, as it seems to bring us together. . . .

TO DR. APTHORP.

[Nov. 1804.]

MY DEAR BROTHER, — I was much gratified by the pleasing accounts of your health and situation, contain'd in your last letter, and of the agreeable plan of a garden then in Contemplation, and I hope by this time executed. I suppose gardens with you are pleasure grounds, laid out for walking. I wish you may long enjoy the Air and exercise it will afford you.

For want of a better subject, and as you seem'd pleas'd with my description of Boston, I will endeavor to give you some idea of the additions to it. As our dear little



Children have pass'd the summer in the country, I have had frequent opportunities of noticing the improvements making in different directions; so many houses have been built upon the Neck, and the Middle well paved, it has now more the appearance of town than country. The remaining lands are judiciously laid out for handsome streets and house lots, which are sold upon condition the purchasers build within three years from the time of sale. Dorchester point and heights are annexed to the Town by a late act of the legislature, a bridge uniting them is nearly completed. It is to be called South Boston, and will afford many delightful situations, commanding an extensive prospect, and will also be an accommodation to men of business. You undoubtedly know from the North we have a bridge leading to Charlestown, which is a well settled town. A State prison, or penitentiary house, is now erecting there, of large hammer'd Stone. It is divided into solitary cells, lighted by small apertures in the wall, each cell just large eno' to contain a Bed, a small table and chair. I have been in one of them, and suppose a few hours in the day a person might read in them. The door is of Iron, and fastens upon the outside with a strong bolt. The convicts are to be conducted by their keeper to the work shop nearly opposite the prison, where they are to be fully employed through the day and return to the cell at night. What a melancholy reflection that human Nature should require such restraints, but it is a fact that one of the Labourers employ'd upon the building was convicted of an attempt to forge a lottery-ticket that had drawn the highest prize. Forging, with us, is not a capital crime, therefore it is probable he will be the first person confin'd within its dreary walls, there leisurely to reflect upon his own folly.

At West B. the improvements have been very rapid. From the point where the old pest-house stood to Mr. Inman's farm a very handsome bridge has been built, which brings the Colleges within four miles of us. There are many new buildings in Cambridge. They are erecting a new College,<sup>1</sup> the Students are so numerous as to make it necessary. There are more than two hundred in number. The government of the College is very respectable, but it has lately met with a great loss in the death of President Willard, who was exactly calculated to fill that important place, a man of great learning and piety, and of such sweetness of temper as to conciliate the affections of the Young persons under his care. In the Library room are fourteen thousand volumes, well chosen and handsomely bound; a Librarian constantly attends to show them to strangers. The philosophical room and museum are well supplied. It will give you pleasure to know the Church<sup>2</sup> is in good repair and open; upon the Sunday a very worthy young Gentleman officiates as a reader. He is not yet in orders. The congregation is not large, but they are respectable people.

The ninth of October completed my seventieth year. In so long a life there is much of sin, much of folly, to be lamented. I wish I could look forward to the last hour with the serenity that you seem to do; tho' I have not attain'd that yet, I do hope that Mercy will finally triumph over justice, and that we may be permitted to meet hereafter in the regions of Bliss and Immortality. As the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much, I wish to be remembered in yours. . . .

<sup>1</sup> Stoughton Hall.

<sup>2</sup> Christ Church.

## TO HER NIECES.

MY DEAR YOUNG LADIES,— I suppose that you are so perfectly united, that a few lines address'd to both will be quite as agreeable as separate letters. I am to thank you, my dear Sarah Ann, for your beautiful Sketch of the outside of your Uncle's house, and the minute and very acceptable description of the Interior. It makes me more acquainted with the situation than any account I have ever received. I should like, under your guidance, to walk from room to room, and to sit down for a short time in the one appropriated to writing and drawing, there to admire our young cousin's productions. I contemplate the view of the house and gardens with much pleasure, and feel oblig'd to your Mama for the kind thought, and extremely so to yourself for your ready acquiescence. . . .

You, my dear Henrietta, will accept my thanks for the beautiful shell. Your cousin Susan intends copying it. She is so abash'd when she hears the compliments paid to her rose-bud, and does not seem, since she has seen your productions, dispos'd to favour me with any more of hers. I have still so great a partiality for young people that I wish to be acquainted with every one of your family circle. Girls with us are very scarce. Among all my Grandchildren I have but two, and I find myself dispos'd to love them almost too well.

## TO DR. APTHORP.

MY DEAR BROTHER,— . . . I was prevail'd on, the last winter, to be present at an ordination, the first thing of the kind I had ever seen. Mr. B. [Buckminster] was the person ordain'd for the ministry, a young Gentleman that, like yourself, seem'd born for that profession and will,

without doubt, prove an ornament to it. His time of life under twenty, and a most pleasing countenance, interested every one in his favour. The exercises of the day were conducted with great solemnity, the sermon preach'd by his Father, who is venerated for his piety and admir'd for his talents. I should have observ'd, it was at the church in Brattle Square, of which the celebrated Dr. Cooper was minister when you was here. It has been rebuilt since that time and accommodates a very respectable and numerous congregation. We were invited to pass the Afternoon at Deacon Storer's, who is connected with my family by the marriage of his Son with my daughter. The good old Gentleman highly enjoyed the day, and the company of the two Mr. Buckminsters, who pass'd an hour with us in the evening, greatly added to the pleasure of the party.

TO DR. APTHORP.

[Spring, 1803.]

MY EVER DEAR BROTHER,— Having just heard the *Galen* is to sail immediately, I cannot forbear acknowledging your very good letter. . . . Your extract from Bishop Patrick I have frequently read, and hope to make it my own, but I think it must be an exalted degree of Piety that will enable us to overcome the fear of Death and our apprehensions of what the future state of existence may be.

When I last [wrote] you I little expected to have introduc'd the young Clergyman to your notice. His early and close application to study has so much impair'd (I hope not destroy'd) his health as to demand immediate attention. His case does not require medical aid so much as total relaxation from parochial duties. He has a large congregation who have kindly allow'd him a year's absence, in hopes that the voyage, and journeys he may be enabled to take,

will restore his health. He bears a most excellent Character and is celebrated as a young man of the first talents for his profession. I have not much personal acquaintance with him, but as he call'd upon me and earnestly requested a letter to my Reverend Brother, I thought I could not refuse him an introduction to your amiable and charming family. If he should be long enough in Cambridge, and it is consistent with your feelings to admit him to one of those delightful family meetings you describe, it will be the utmost I can expect or desire. I hope any civilities you may kindly show him will not give trouble to my good Sister or any of your family. I would just hint to the younger Ladies to take care of their hearts, as it is much the fashion to be in love with him here. You know in this Country we have a great partiality for the Gentlemen of the Clergy, and particularly for one so young and so interesting. . . .

I have had a very sick winter and been unable to go to Church or visit my Children for four months past, but as the Spring is coming on I think the genial warmth of the Sun will again invigorate my old limbs, and permit me to enjoy the many comforts I have still remaining.

. . . My Son is much engag'd in public business but contrives to see me every day. He usually calls about one o'clk with my Son, Mr. Storer, and when my third Son, Mr. C. is at home, we settle the affairs of the Nation, and feel ourselves quite politicians; however at least we are chearful together, and it is the principal variety I have.

TO MR. THOMAS APTHORP.

[Summer or autumn, 1806.]

MY DEAR BROTHER,—The readiness with which I acknowledge the receipt of your unexpected, tho' highly

valued favour of the 1st March, which was handed me late in June, will doubtless convince you of the pleasure it afforded me. The style is expressive of good health, and as much happiness as we any of us have a right to expect in our present state of existence. My situation and domestic affairs you seem to be acquainted with through our Brother, Dr. Apthorp. . . .

There have been what is generally call'd very great improvements in the town, but to me who love quiet, the numbers of avenues to the town and the streets within it, have made it so noisy, and particularly the west end of it, that it has lost its greatest charm. The buildings are continu'd so far that you must ride many miles before you can arrive at the country in any direction. We still have the Common and Mall, near which is a very superb State house and several elegant brick dwelling houses, so situated as to have a commanding view of that delightful spot, where the variety of trees, grass and distant view of the water, each contributes to the beauty of the whole, and the dear little Children walking in the Mall and cows feeding on the grass, animate and give an interest to the observer. You mention Major B.'s family. When you favour me again with a continuation of our Correspondence I should like to have an account of both his and Mr. L.'s families. I wish to know who are taken and who are left. I still remember them with grateful Affection. We read your letter in the dining parlour and felt particularly acquainted with the Ponsonby family, from having a tinted engraving of the dwelling of those Ladies who wisely preferred the society of each other in their romantic spot, to the more brilliant prospects that no doubt were offer'd them. We read their history the last Summer, but did not then suspect how nearly we were connected. The pleasing idea you gave us

of your amiable companion makes us feel an interest in all her connections.

Now, my dear Brother, I will attempt to give you some account, but by no means a description, of the most stupendous sight we poor mortals are allow'd to see, a total eclipse of the Sun, which took place the 16th of June, more apparent to us, the inhabitants of Boston, than those of any other part of the Globe. It was progressing an hour, during which we watch'd it with Smoak'd glasses. Total darkness, three minutes and a half, when many stars were perfectly brilliant, particularly in the West. It was truly sublime and magnificent, notwithstanding the chill, which equall'd that of night. Myself and children assembled in the yard, as we wish'd to observe it in every stage of its progress, which we could with common window glass, smoak'd in different degrees. My little Grandchildren were at their Aunt Storer's, of whom they are very fond, each accommodated with a glass, their countenances quite philosophic, their minds fully engag'd, and their noses partaking of the smoak in contact with them. When the darkness was evident, but not total, the effect upon Animal nature was wonderful. The pigeons precipitately flew to their homes, the little birds, of which we have many nests in our trees, ceas'd to sing, and the more domestic animals compos'd themselves for the night, and when the Glorious Luminary again broke forth, with his refulgent brightness, they each in their several ways hail'd the return of day with animated joy. Indeed, it was so stupendous a sight, it was worth living seventy years to see, and now if I was as good as old Simeon I should be apt to say, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy Servant depart in peace." I must refer you to a paper in the Ninth vol. of the Spectator, giving an account of a similar occurrence (90 years past), but instead

of those fears there mention'd, our sentiments were reverence, wonder and delight. It is impossible to begin upon any other subject; therefore I must conclude with wishing, whenever you and your Amiable Wife are summon'd from your charming residence on Sion's Hill, you may be receiv'd into the Heavenly Jerusalem, where we hope to see greater things than these.

By a young gentleman of B. we had a calculation of the Eclipse here, publish'd in a pamphlet previous to its appearance, and it was critically exact, even to a moment of time. I shall be happy to forward it to you, if in my power. Whenever you or my dear Sister can favour me with a few lines, they will be gratefully receiv'd by your affectionate friend.

TO MRS. EAST APTHORP.

Oct. 5th, 1807.

MY DEAR SISTER, — I had much pleasure by receiving your kind letter by Mr. Buckminster. I feel gratified by your cordial reception and repeated attentions to him. He expresses himself highly delighted, and assures me three of the pleasantest days of his life were pass'd at Cambridge. Of my Brother he speaks with enthusiasm, even his erect figure and expressive countenance greatly interested him, and much more the chearful piety of his heart and the valuable acquirements of his mind. He address'd himself to me, saying "he is as upright as yourself, Madam." I feel pleas'd with any resemblance, and wish in every respect I were more similar to him. If, without giving you trouble, a profile of that countenance, with one of your own, could be enclos'd me in a letter, I should highly value the favour, but would by no means request anything which could be productive of inconvenience to yourself or either of the Young Ladies, to one of whom I must undoubtedly be



oblig'd for it. I mean only a white shade, taken by candle light on the wall. Perhaps I ought to say with us they are done with ease. My eldest daughter has a taste for painting and drawing and has oblig'd many of our friends in this way. She has reduc'd profiles of her Father, whose features were belov'd, but whom we never could prevail on to sit for a picture while living. I seldom take the liberty of introducing Strangers to my friends at a distance, fearing it will give them trouble, but in this instance I cannot regret it. The Young Gentlemen are in raptures. (Mr. Thacher I know only by name.)

TO MISS APTHORP.

I thank you, my dear Niece, for so obligingly continuing your Mama's letter. Her animated description of the splendid day made me a partaker in the gay scenes. It must have been doubly pleasing to my young friends that their arrival at the seat of Science and Literature was at a time of such general hilarity, in addition to the tranquil enjoyments of your family circle. With both the public and private scenes Mr. B. expresses the utmost delight, but more particularly dwells on the Sacred Music, which elevates the mind as it delights the sense. . . .

The enclos'd butterfly I send, not as an elegant painting, but to show the size and brilliancy. It is an exact copy from nature.

TO DR. APTHORP.

[1807-8.]

MY DEAR BROTHER, — . . . Our President has thought fit to lay an embargo upon all vessels outward bound. All who are dispos'd to come in with good cargoes and return in ballast we suppose may be well receiv'd, tho' it is generally allow'd we are so well supplied with all foreign articles that

we cannot feel any inconvenience from this measure for many years, tho' upon this subject, like all political ones, opinions vary and parties are strong on both sides. . . .

S. B.

TO DR. AND MRS. APTHORP.

[1808.]

MY DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER, — Excuse my addressing you both upon one sheet, as my Nephew C. W. A. has called to inform me he shall depart immediately for New York to take passage in the packet for England; pressing business obliges him to leave his family for some time, and our embargo prevents sailing from hence. . . . I hope it will not be long before a free communication will be again allow'd between G. B. and U. S. In the course of the next year the period for choosing a President of the Union will return. Whether Mr. J., who now declines being consider'd a Candidate, will change his mind, (not improbable) or a new one be elected to the important office, we cannot decide, but our hopes are in favour of one not actuated by the same partialities and prejudices. If the moderation of your Government should continue and our rulers duly appreciate the blessings of peace, all may yet be well. We trust an over ruling Providence that looks through the affairs of men will still continue that blessing to us.



*Old City Hall & Court House*

## CHAPTER VII

### HOME LIFE AND ANXIETIES

1808—1815

The Way to Heaven is set with Briars and Thorns ; and they, who arrive at the Kingdom, travel over craggy Rocks and comfortless Deserts

THOMAS À KEMPIS.

It is near this time that we begin, through the recollections of Charles Bulfinch's children of their early home, to catch some glimpses of what passed there from a still closer point of view.

In this way we learn of the faithful servant woman, quite a character in her way, "Ma'am Pollard," and her daughter and assistant, Eliza; of the great cat, named Slug, that the boys petted and teased; and of the four silver cups from which all the family drank at table. In later life the older children could easily recall the Sunday visits to their

grandmother in Bowdoin Square, when they were expected, very much to their dread and confusion, to repeat a hymn to her.

But there were also more cheerful recollections, of stopping to call on the old lady after school and getting a piece of cake; of playing, too, in the large old garden, where stood the famous great pear-tree, the finest the neighborhood could boast, and reminding one more of some huge maple. Here, too, were lilies of the valley, and roses, of which the grandmother writes, with many other flowers, and borders of the fragrant box.

One of the older sons, my Uncle Francis, has told of going with his father in a carriage, accompanied by Bishop Cheverus, on the occasion of a school visitation, and also of his spending some time, when a lad, in writing ballots for the voters to use on election day.

Another of the stories takes us back into the midst of the family of schoolboys, and shows us the naughty Thomas resisting his mother's entreaties, commands, and finally coercion, until his sister Susan has to come to the rescue, and the united strength of both is required to master the culprit. We can easily picture to ourselves the sturdy boy, rosy-cheeked and black-eyed, the very image of defiance; but to those who remember the dignified presence, the sweet urbanity, of the author of the "Age of Fable," it seems very amusing.

One of the children — and it was very likely Thomas, too — composed these lines, on the model of "Draw the Sword, Scotland," that light up the scene for us, and sound as if boys could be clamorous even in those dignified days: —

"Come in to dinner, dinner, dinner,  
Up from the kitchen has pass'd the roast meat.  
Eliza is calling, calling, calling,

Who heeds not her call will have nothing to eat.  
 The potatoes are peeling, peeling, peeling,  
 The potatoes are peeling, and nearly are done.  
 The cat is a squealing, squealing, squealing,  
 For somebody's trodden her long tail upon.  
 Come in to dinner, dinner, dinner,  
 Eat as ye've eaten in days lang syne.  
 Bring up the pudding, the pudding, the pudding;  
 The meat we have ate, and it was very fine."

Several of the boys went to Exeter Academy. Thomas, and most probably George, were fitted for college there. The anecdotes of their youth are all too few. No doubt, if the elder sister had lived to tell her stories of those days to another generation of children, we should have known much more.

For the fullest account of the family life we are indebted to the grandmother's letters, to which we turn again.

TO FRANCES APTHORP.

[July, 1809]

MY DEAR NIECE, — I believe I am to acknowledge the receipt of two letters from you, but as it is long since I have undertaken to write myself, and dictating has become almost as inconvenient to me, you will excuse my not noticing them separately. It is a great pleasure to me to hear from you, and occasionally be inform'd of the situation of my dear Brother's family. I must request of you to continue your kind attention, and to favour me with frequent accounts of your family circle with you, and of your connections at a distance.

Last Sunday, I was present at the baptism of a little stranger, my daughter B.'s tenth son. It is a charming infant, about three weeks old, and that day received the name of Stephen Greenleaf, for her venerable Grandfather, to whose pious and unwearied cares she is indebted for such

principles and education as have qualified her for any rank in society, and will, we feel assur'd, be conducive to her future as well as present happiness. That the dear Infant may with the name inherit the virtues of his ancestor, is my dearest wish. The mention of this good old Gentleman, who lived to the age of ninety, reminds me of a visit I had last week from Miss H., now in her ninety-fifth year. She inquired very particularly about your family, and her niece Miss F. Hutchinson, by which title she still calls her. She express'd a great wish to receive a letter from her. Tell your good Father she had walked from School street, appear'd in perfect health, and spoke of him with great respect and affection. This will be handed you by Mr. T. A., who sails for Ireland and means to visit England before his return to A., and it will probably be long before you receive it, but as it is the only opportunity for writing that offers at present, I think best to avail myself of it. To your venerable Father, your excellent Mother, your Brother, Sisters and their dear little children, I will thank you to offer the suitable remembrances, as thro' you, my dear Niece, I wish to be consider'd as writing to each of them. I expect my little children to come in directly for a part of Grandmama's treat. I should admire to have your Nieces and Nephews to partake a few strawberries with them. I am the universal Grandmama of all my young acquaintances, and delight to contribute to their pleasures, convinc'd that though life abounds with sources of enjoyment, the season for improving them is transient, and should not be ungratefully neglected. In kind regards to absent friends I always wish to include Mrs. W. and her family. Mr. W.'s widow sister is a near neighbour of ours. She is an amiable woman, and by her exertions has supported her family very respectably.

I hope my Brother T.'s little darling is still living, as I think he must be a great pleasure to his parents. To them I would offer my most affectionate remembrances, and if he had a leisure moment to write me it would give me pleasure to hear from him.

There are two new houses for public worship erecting in Boston, one superintended by my Son. He has given the proprietors a Gothic plan, wishing to introduce something new among us. It is generally approv'd, and particularly appropriate to the Saintly devotion of the preacher for whose congregation it is design'd. The other will be very large and stands at the head of the Mall, where your Father may recollect the old Granary was placed. It is intended for a new society, and we hope will be well fill'd.

With many thanks, my dear Niece, for your acceptable letters, and every wish for your happiness, I am with great esteem yours affectionately.

[Spring, 1810.]

MY DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER, — . . . Our Gentlemen who make politicks their subject, look serious, and at times impart their gloom to me, but I do not suffer it to remain, as I am fully convinc'd that all events are controul'd by Infinite wisdom and mercy, and look through every cloud to the dawn and splendour of a brighter day. The subject of politicks has been amply discussed by our best writers. Mr. Ames, a member of Congress, whose early death was deeply lamented, has feelingly warn'd his Country of the evils that might be apprehended. His works since his death are collected and publish'd in one volume octavo, and a slight sketch of his character, as just as it is elegant, makes the book interesting to his friends, as well as calculated to be useful to mere indifferent readers. A late pamphlet by Walsh speaks so justly, we think, of your

country that I could wish you to hear it read, and if possible to procure one I shall do myself the pleasure to send you by this opportunity a sermon preach'd last Thursday (our Annual Fast day) by Mr. Channing, the truly pious and excellent young Minister I mention'd in my last, who as Goldsmith expresses it "like a lofty Mountain stands on Earth, but whose aspiring Mind is elevated to Heaven."

He is settled at the Gothic Church (in the dissenting line) that was begun when I wrote you last. We were so very kindly requested to be present at the Dedication of it, and had so excellent a pew reserv'd for our accommodation, that even I was induc'd to venture, tho' the Season was winter, and I am usually stationary during that time. We get many new publications here. As I have much leisure I devote my morning to serious reading, beginning with the scriptures, always most interesting; the latter part of the day my daughters are usually with me and we entertain ourselves with the most approv'd new and popular productions. I often wish yourselves and my dear Nieces were with us. We have read *Coelebs* with pleasure; the characters of the Stanley family are admirable, and many of the remarks do great credit to the mind and pen of Mrs. Moore. It has not been altogether a popular work here. The mixture of religious discussions and family narrative seldom accord to form an agreeable work, but the motives of the writer always prejudice us in favour of her compositions. We have a periodical review publish'd here called the *Anthology*, sometimes severe, but not equal to the *Edinburgh*, which we occasionally read. We have two newspapers, printed every week-day. They are in opposition to each other, and as both parties aim more at victory than conviction, they are usually fill'd with abuses of our rulers and of each other. . . .



My little girl that I have often mention'd to you is twelve years old; she has a delicate constitution and complexion, is educating under able masters, and making very good improvement.

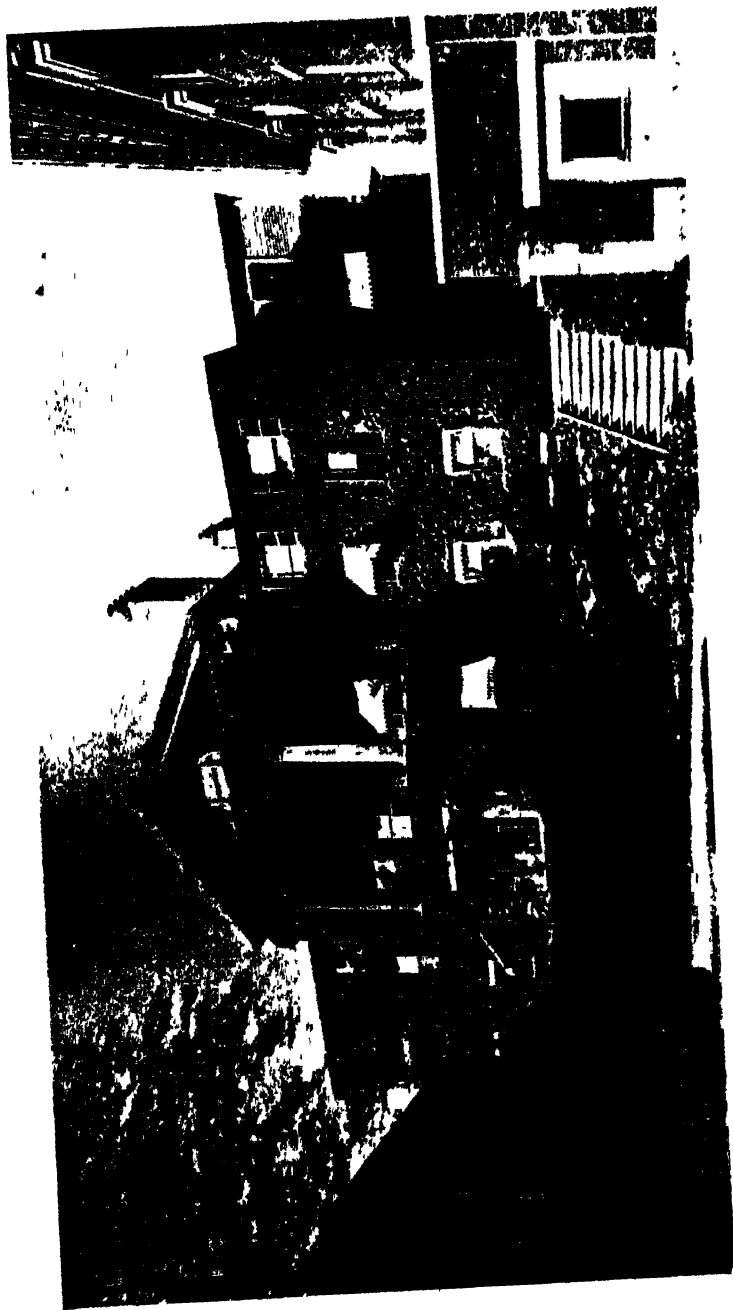
In addition to the useful branches of reading, writing, grammar, geography and Arithmetic she takes lessons in Music and is sufficiently compleat in dancing. If her life is spared, I think she will be a great comfort to my later years.

An old respected friend of ours has lately died, whom your good Father may remember, Dr. Lloyd. He had attained his eighty-second year, and was a much esteem'd practising physician till within six months of his death. His daughter, Mrs. Borland, a widow Lady and with five Children, lived with him and paid him, till the last, every attention that duty and affection could dictate. The unremitted cares and attentions of his Grand children was his favorite subject, and they are now consol'd by the recollection. Miss H. has arrived at Ninety four. The last time we saw her she desir'd to be very particularly remember'd to your family, and her Niece Miss H. Farewell, my dear friends.

TO DR. APTHORP.

[1810.]

. . . I should not have address'd you again so immediately, but to introduce to your friendly notice Mr. Francis Parkman, an amiable Young Gentleman of most respectable Connections, in very affluent circumstances, which enables them to be extensively useful, their own worthiness of Character and benevolent dispositions aiding the means which have been so liberally imparted to them. They are our near Neighbours, and upon his calling to take leave I thought I could not refuse him a few lines of introduction



SOUTH FRONT McLEAN ASYLUM SOMERVILLE



to you. . . . He is very young and intends passing two or three years abroad before he enters on the duties of his profession. He has been a student in D. for some years past. The Episcopal churches do not increase with us, tho' I have the pleasure to say myself and all my connections are in that line.

The Trinity, the Chapel and Christ church are still open and have sensible men at their head. About a year since a very worthy man was settled as Colleague with Mr. Freeman at the Chapel. . . .

Since writing the above I learn that Mr. P. has a companion, Mr. H., a respectable young Gentleman of the same pursuits, but not personally known to me.

TO DR. APTHORP.

[October, 1810.]

MY DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER, — I am to thank you for your kind and particularly acceptable letters, by Mr. A. I had been impatiently waiting for some account from yourselves, as we had heard of my dear Brother's fall, and illness in consequence, without the relief of knowing that he had, in any degree, recover'd from it. For this blessing I join with your dear Children in grateful acknowledgements to that Power that has so long continu'd to us his valued life. My own health is tolerable considering I have just completed my seventy-sixth year. I pass my time much as I have formerly acquainted you. The Morning of each day I devote to serious reading, and the afternoons to lighter subjects, which do not always prove so entertaining. We have lately read those works you mention, except Clark's Travels, which have not yet reach'd this country. I shall probably be among the first to see them whenever they arrive, as my love for reading, which is my princi-

pal amusement, induces my Children and friends to procure every work for me that is much approv'd. Mr. Parkman, whom I took the liberty to introduce to you, has wrote his Mother so pleasing an account of your kind reception of him, and the serene chearfulness that appears in your family, it has renew'd the wish I have so often express'd that we could occasionally meet. He speaks of the evening pass'd with you as the most agreeable one since he left home.

The number of buildings have so increas'd with us as to have nearly fill'd all the vacant land that you, my dear Brother, no doubt remember. They are now actually engag'd in levelling Beacon hill, which, as it was a natural beauty in the town, and afforded a very commanding view of the adjacent country, we, whose partiality for things formerly admir'd are still strong, cannot but regret. The advocates for continual changes say that our new and elegant State house, situated near the hill, enables every one who wishes it to enjoy the same prospect. My Son is now employing his Architectural powers in planning and superintending a new Court house. It is built upon the same land the old one occupied. You may recollect it was in Queen Street. It is to be built of hewn stone and will be very ornamental to that part of the town. He has seven children; the eldest Son is in a hardware store, the second enter'd college this year. He is intended for one of the learned professions; he is a very fine boy, and I hope will be eminent in whatever he may undertake. I wish you, my dear Sister, in your next letter, frankly to say whether the introduction of those Gentlemen by whom I have written, has been any inconvenience to you. I will not by any means repeat a thing which can be likely to give you the slightest trouble. To yourselves &c. my affections &c.

TO DR. APTHORP.

July 13<sup>th</sup>, 1811.

MY EVER DEAR BROTHER, — It is impossible for me to express the pleasure it gives me to receive a letter from you. Your last was particularly grateful, because it gave me so full an account of the situation of yourself and your amiable family. Your improv'd state of health and perfect composure of mind are real and substantial blessings, which I join with your family in rejoicing you receive. Your number of Grandchildren exceed mine. I have ten in all, healthy, promising, fine children. I have many comforts, which I am sensible of and I hope grateful for. The greatest pleasure I have is in reading. Mr. C. has a pretty library, and is continually adding to it. I generally get the cutting of the new books and the first reading; have lately read MacKnight upon the Apostolical Epistles with great pleasure and satisfaction. He comes the nearest to my ideas of the Character and Mission of our Saviour of any one whose books I have read. Some deny his pre-existence, some his Divinity, and others his free agency. M. seems to me pretty clearly to unite and prove them all. I have entertain'd myself with the old poems of Dante. Tho' partly visionary, I have been pleas'd with them. His Inferno is full of fable and horror. I was most delighted with the Purgatorio, some lines of which I thought very beautiful. I have also been amus'd by reading the Saracen, translated from the French. There are some most excellent characters in it; those of the Saracen himself and the Archbishop of Tours are admirably well drawn. We have two quarterly reviews, one edited by Walsh, whose political writings perhaps you have seen, the other the Portfolio. They furnish us with new topics of conversation. We get the Edinburgh Review and almost every new publication.

My eyes hold out pretty well, tho' I have used them very much. I still see to read and work, with glasses, nearly as well as ever. The anniversary of American Independence has been lately celebrated with great splendour by both parties, for unhappily we are much divided, long processions and military escorts displaying the extent of both.

You know I generally give you some little account of town affairs. Old Beacon hill is taking down to fill up the Mill pond ; as every foot of ground has become so valuable the owners of the Hill, who are the heirs of Gov. Hancock, did not incline to lose the opportunity of making it useful, and have preferred interest to elegance, not a very new thing. I believe I mention'd to you we are building a new Court house. It is of white stone, and will be very handsome when completed, planned and superintended by my Son. The house I have now resided in for fifty years has lately been put in complete repair ; it has all the Gardens and lands it ever had, which is now, I assure you, rather an extraordinary thing. I walk in it, and contemplate the moss-rose and other flowers with the utmost delight, my extreme love for them not having abated in the least degree.

We have lately been watching a bird's nest that was upon a tree near one of the chambers, and admir'd the daily progress of its little inhabitants. Our children derive much pleasure from such things, and the care of their live stock employs their leisure hours between schools. Believe me, my dear Brother, tho' so great a distance separates us, I am in my mind much with you ; I enjoy your domestic circle, and even your excursion in your Bath chair. To Mrs. A. and every branch of your affectionate and interesting family I desire to be most particularly mention'd with regard. To yourself may every blessing you so well know

how to value and enjoy be long continu'd is the ardent wish of your affectionate Sister, S. Bulfinch.

Our non-intercourse prevents having many opportunities of conveying letters.

This must lay till one offers, which I hope will be soon, as I am told Mrs. Powell, who was Miss Goldthwait, afterwards widow of old Dr. Gardner, who, I think you will remember, intends soon to visit her friends in England. I assure you I take every opportunity that offers, and I hope you will be good eno' to do the same.

TO MISS APTHORP.

[Autumn, 1811.]

MY DEAR NIECE, — I have many thanks to offer you for your last letter, which was particularly acceptable, tho' a letter from England I ever esteem among my chief pleasures. We have pass'd the Summer months at a most delightful Country seat about four miles from Boston. It is belonging to Mr. John Apthorp, and was taken by my Son C. for an accommodation to my daughter's health while some neat repairs were made to our house. I sincerely wish you could have seen and admir'd it with me, for to see and admire were synonymous terms. The house itself is commodious and spacious (not elegant) but the distant view of small towns and the delightful one of Fresh pond, on the bank of which the house and farm are situated, were constant subjects of delightful contemplation. The lofty forest trees, just sufficiently shading the water view, the piazza that allow'd us to walk and enjoy it without fear of colds, and the morning scene always brought to my recollection "These are thy glorious works, Parent of good." Our amusements within were reading the "Scottish Chiefs," Clarkson's Portraiture of Quakerism, a work we were all



delighted with, and wish'd all sects could unite in acting as they profess, and every new work that was well recommended.

To Mr. W. and family I wish to be kindly remember'd. I hear they have one Son just fitted for the Church. It is a noble profession, and I hope he will be useful and happy in it.

TO DR. APTHORP.

[Near Jan. 1, 1812]

MY EVER DEAR BROTHER, — . . . I am at a loss how to address you, as my course of life affords but little variety. We have for some months past been visited by a Comet, which has been an object of great curiosity to the children. I have myself seen them formerly, and recollect one that appear'd to me more luminous. Perhaps its superior brilliancy might not be real, but only owing to the astonishment such objects excite in young minds. This that we have lately seen, was consider'd by the learned to occupy a greater space in the Heavens than the one I refer to. It has occasion'd our professors and others to write upon the subject, but after all that can be said, it appears to me they must rather excite our admiration of the wonderful works of the Almighty than be comprehended and explain'd by the small share of knowledge we at present possess. It was visible every evening for some months, and might be constantly admir'd by merely going to the window to observe it. I was never allow'd to omit it, as my little Grandson frequently came down from his chamber, saying "Oh, Grandmama, it never was so bright before!" Indeed, I believe they all made a point of viewing it the last thing before they lay down for the night.

Our political system is pretty much as it has been. We have two strong parties, great talk of preparations for War,

but as those things frequently end in proclamations and words, the lovers of peace and old England sincerely hope this will be of that kind. We have at present great share of health, peace and plenty, even of English goods. The stores and shops are full and the prices not much rais'd. We have many calamities by fire, a late one has been very interesting. The Theatre at Richmond in Virginia was, the last week, burnt to the ground. It was suppos'd to have taken fire by raising a light behind the scenes. More than two hundred persons perish'd, many of them burnt, and others in their eagerness to get out trampled upon and otherwise injur'd, by leaping from windows. It is very distant from us, but the melancholy sensations it occasion'd seem from all accounts to be general through the States.

. . . The Bishop of Lincoln's new work is very highly spoken of, but we have not yet been able to procure it. As soon as we can I shall give it an attentive perusal, but agree with you the less severity Christians show to each other for different opinions the more they prove their knowledge of the spirit of their holy religion.<sup>1</sup> . . .

<sup>1</sup> The reference in the above letter to the Bishop of Lincoln's new work was called out by the following letter to Mrs. Bulfinch from Dr. Apthorp, dated Cambridge, January 29, 1811: —

"I am now reading a refutation of Calvinism, just published by the Bishop of Lincoln, the Patron of my family. . . .

"The Bishop's Book gives very prudent advice, but I think it rather too severe against Methodism, which, if quite suppressed, would extinguish our English Religion, which is in a manner crucified between two thieves, fanaticism and formality. In my opinion, there is but one principle which can preserve Religion. I mean a true conversion of the heart to God, as prescribed in more than an hundred texts in Scripture. I doubt not but you have well considered this, my dear Sister; it is now my chief object, as I am just entering on the 79th year of my age, in pretty good health, with just sight enough for common life, but not able to read. My Children read to me Bp. Patrick's, Bishop Taylor's and Dr. Horneck's devotions and writings, in which I find great comfort. I have settled everything, I hope, for both worlds; my dear

Archdeacon Paley's works have lately been republish'd here and we have read them with pleasure. . . .

Major B. and family I often speak of when Miss Sheaffe dines with us, which is frequently the case. She delights to go back to those old friends and former scenes. She is another old lady who is gratified to come and pass a day with us when it suits herself, and tho' I think you never knew her, she was quite an intimate at Major B.'s and my Brother Thomas's. Farewell.

TO MISS APTHORP.

MY DEAR NIECE,—I am always much delighted with your descriptive letters. The last gave me an account of the reception of a new Chancellor. It must have been particularly interesting to you from his being one of the Royal family, which we suppos'd added greatly to the splendour of the scene. His affability and politeness made those attentions to him pleasure that else must have been mere tribute of respect to his exalted station. We have no public breakfasts with us but our Commencements &c. Our Commencement here bears a strong resemblance to the entertainment you describe. The Gentlemen who graduate generally

Children are satisfied with the care I have taken of them, and I hope to die out of debt and in good humour with every one, as I am apt to say. As I cannot often write I will continue to fill up this sheet of paper with such things as may express my love to you and all my American friends and relations. I am glad to hear so pleasing an account of your Son and of the esteem in which he is held by his fellow-citizens. I think he has chosen a good profession, in a new and flourishing Country. In this place we enjoy much magnificence in Architecture: a noble College is building in the next field to my own house, so as to make an interesting object; the decorations Ionic columns, the pattern of which was brought from Athens. Two large buildings are finished, but the whole will be of surprizing extent. I have this and other pleasing recollections of your son, who was so good as to buy me some fine Bibles at Paris. Give my particular respects and best wishes for him and other branches of your own family, whom I have not the happiness of knowing personally "

invite as many or more than can be accommodated in one house. The last year one of my Daughters dined with a company of four hundred persons. The guests were invited by two Gentlemen who united in giving the entertainment, which was compleat in every thing that could give elegance or variety to the table and accommodation to the company. The exercises are from nine till three or four o'clock, after which the companies assemble to dine, either in houses hired for the purpose or in the open air, if so it may be call'd, the tables being set on the grass, an awning above to exclude the air and sun, and carpets beyond, in the direction from which the wind might be expected to blow. After the dinner, the entertainment often concludes with dancing. You ask if we have Balloons in America. We have seen them exhibited in a large open space which we call the Common, a beautiful piece of ground of forty-five acres, on one side of which is our Mall, a neat and elegant walk, opposite which are blocks of superb brick buildings whose situation is truly delightful, overlooking the Common and Mall, to the distant view of Roxbury and Brookline, separated from the Common by Charles River. Our Balloons here are small, but they have often rais'd in my mind a wish to see my distant friends, but that word Atlantic always puts a stop to my wishes. I agree with you they are calculated more to amuse than benefit the world. Dr. Jeffries, you know, ascended in one from some part of France, but the success did not equal his expectations, for it is a subject he never inclines to speak upon. He is now a respectable practising physician here. I have express'd my regards for your family and some others to my dear Br., but I must request you to offer my affectionate regards to Mrs. W. and Miss A. Their kind letters and remembrances of their Sisters here are as grati-

fyng to me as to those to whom they are addressed. Miss A.'s truly exemplary Character is mention'd with great respect by all who know her.

TO DR. APTHORP.

[1812.]

MY DEAR BROTHER, — War being declar'd and all intercourse between our countries at least interrupted, I did not expect to have had an opportunity of acknowledging the receipt of your obliging and much valued letter, but Mr. Parkman, Brother to the young Gentleman I once introduc'd to you, is going to Philadelphia to sail in the first Cartel from thence. He is a worthy young man and of a respectable family. He has no particular pursuits, but travelling for improvement and amusement before he engages in business. If he should visit Cambridge it will be in his power to deliver this to you. Mr. F. Parkman brought with him a late publication giving a description of Cambridge, a historical account of the different Colleges, ornamented with elegant engravings of them and the other public buildings. With a readiness to oblige that characterizes that family, he call'd upon me immediately upon his return, inform'd me of many agreeable particulars relating to yourself and your estimable family, and to make me still more acquainted with your situation, offer'd the book for my inspection. I not only admir'd the views, but read the account with great interest, knowing you had so long been an inhabitant of that place. . . .

My Son and family are all well. He continues Chairman of the board of Selectmen, has lately been engag'd in superintending the building of a public school, three stories high, to accommodate scholars in three different branches of education.

TO MISS APTHORP.

[1812.]

MY DEAR NIECE, — I am much oblig'd to you for the indulgence you allow me of receiving your entertaining letters without exacting regular replies, but as we now have few opportunities of writing I will not avail myself of it at this time. It would have been happy for us if your good Father's prayers for peace between our two Countries had been granted, but we have a war and a peace party and the former has prevail'd. While those of the Northern States are labouring for peace, those of the Southern make them ready for battle. We know that the war has begun, but how or when it will end can only be known to the Supreme Being. Many lives must be lost, and many individuals much distress'd.

We have had two political fast-days, and the Clergy have exerted their talents in vain. They are almost unanimous in favour of peace and reconciliation.

One of the most distinguish'd of our Ministers, Mr. B., and whom you may remember I introduc'd to your notice, and whose voyage to England in pursuit of health we hoped would have been successful, has exchang'd his useful labors on earth (we hope) for tranquillity and joy in Heaven. He has left a great character, not only as a literary man, but as a pious and exemplary Minister. To his church he is a great loss, and to American Literature still greater, such talents and genius but seldom appearing to enlighten admiring hearers with its charms. He was preparing a course of lectures upon Biblical criticism, that good judges think would have done honour to the age. How often it happens that such minds reach their perfection at an early date! He had not attain'd his twenty-ninth year.

The day after his decease, his Father, the respectable Minister of a church in P——, N. H., departed this life, and left a numerous family to mourn their Father and Brother at the same time.

My health is so good that the last Friday I went to hear a Sermon preach'd by the Rev. Mr. Eaton, the Episcopal Clergyman, who is settled at the North Church. He gave a very good discourse from St. Matthew. "Blessed are the Merciful, for they shall obtain Mercy." It was preach'd to the directors and managers of the Boston Female Asylum. The church was exceedingly crowded, as it is a popular institution; there was a good Organ, a great deal of Singing, and some chaunting by a female band. Forty-four female orphans were present, (no others are permitted to partake the benefits of the Asylum) dress'd in blue cotton with white bonnets and kerchiefs, stockings and mitts of their own knitting. At the close of the Sermon, Mr. E. address'd them upon the grateful sense they ought to have of the benefits they receive, and the influence it should have upon their conduct. The Institution has been twelve years established, and one of the Orphans first received into the Asylum has ask'd leave to become a Subscriber, as Mr. E. express'd it, to devote the earliest products of her industry to that institution that had been so useful to herself. He ask'd if it was too much to say "Many Daughters have done Virtuously, but thou excellest them all." After Sermon, the Orphans rose, and sang an original hymn, and were dismiss'd with the blessing. The Preacher with two other Clergymen then accompany'd the Managers to the Asylum, to see the children kneel and with one voice repeat their evening prayers, as if in a public assembly. This is their constant custom, and is very impressive, as they do it with such propriety.

My little girl, whom I have frequently mention'd to you, has been amusing herself with making purses. She sends two of them, one of which she desires may be presented to the young lady who sent me the pretty little diary. The other, to your little girl. If a convenient opportunity offers by this vessel, I shall improve it, if not, shall keep them for another. They are too trifling to put you to any trouble or expense to get them.

TO MISS APTHORP.

MY DEAR NIECE, — . . . The present situation of our country is a subject for a political pen. I can but lament it and feel for both parties, which I do equally. I have sometimes wish'd for defeat rather than success to the Americans, in hopes that would sooner put an end to the contest, but our hopes and fears are continually striving for preëminence and keep us in an uncertain state. My age and infirmities are so increasing upon me, I know not when I shall again write you, but my pleasure in receiving a letter has not at all abated.

. . . We have pass'd through a severe winter. The cold began at Christmas and has continu'd pretty uniformly to the present time. The 24th December the thermometer at Middlebury, Vt., was at twelve below zero. The 25th, in Cambridge, the thermometer stood at 5 below zero, and continu'd to descend some time after sunrise. At Kennebeck, 180 miles east from Boston, it was at 30 below zero. Such a continuance of cold has not been for twenty-two years, and but two days in that period to be compar'd with them. I have been chiefly employ'd in endeavoring to keep myself warm. Your moderate climate would be more congenial to my feelings. But we have a brilliant light of the Sun, and I admit it with pleasure. To me it is an exhilarating object. Again farewell.



TO MISS APTHORP.

[1813 or 1814.]

MY DEAR NIECE,—I did not expect so soon to have had an opportunity of writing you. Mr. G. A. called upon me to say he is going immediately to Lisbon, and hoped before his return to this country he should see England. If so, he should certainly visit Cambridge. He can give you a particular account of us all. We are nearly circumstanc'd as when I wrote last. My health is feeble, but yesterday, the weather being very fine, I ventured to ride as far as C., about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles from B., to visit my Grandson Joseph, who had just enter'd College. He boards in the house your dear and venerable Father, my much esteem'd Brother, built at C. It reminded me of old times, when I used to visit him and my Sister for some days together. It is a very good and elegant house, delightfully situated, commanding an extensive view of the River and the surrounding country, well cultivated as far as the eye can reach. It is now in the possession of Dr. Jennison, whose family is small and enables him to take two young Gentlemen, that could not be accommodated in the College. This University is in great repute. The new class, eighty-six in number, were many of them oblig'd to board in private families (Joseph is the eldest Son of my daughter C.).

They built a new College the last year and are now erecting a very superb stone building, which is the beginning of a plan for laying out the grounds on a grand scale, that it is presum'd will take many years to complete. It is design'd for a center College and contains the Chapel and philosophical and other public rooms, for the use of the government and the students.

Cambridge is a charming village; the Colleges are most respectable in their appearance; nearly opposite them is the

little Church, which my Brother was the means of having erected. I think it will be a pleasure to him to know it is kept open. A Gentleman named Cranston reads the service every Sunday, and occasionally Dr. Gardiner or Mr. Eaton, rector of Christ Church, administers the sacraments.

Cambridge has been the residence of Gentlemen who have built country-seats, and would, I think, please you to ride through it and remark the many beautiful objects that present themselves on every side.

We were agreeably surpris'd a short time since (for Intelligence now, tho' welcome, is unexpected) by a visit from Mr. Parkman to read a part of a letter from his Son, saying he had spent two days in Cambridge in England, and that my connections there were as well as usual. Such information gave me pleasure, and whenever I can be so favour'd as to receive a letter from you containing more particular accounts of your own family and the numerous absent friends for whom I am much interested, I shall be gratified. We hear one of your Sisters is soon to leave you. I shall want to know all the particulars, name of the Gentleman, and if they are to remain near you. To them and every branch of your family offer my best wishes.

Madam Bulfinch lived until February 15, 1815, her season of failing health cheered by the visits of Dr. Freeman and Mr. Carey, the clergymen of King's Chapel, by the companionship of her favorite books and flowers, and by the unwearied attentions of her children.

We give some passages from her last letter : —

June 13<sup>th</sup>, 1814.

MY DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER, — I wrote you very fully, by a late opportunity, and gave you an account of

the sudden illness with which I was attack'd. It has, however, pleas'd the God of Mercy to continue to me the perfect use of my intellects. I have since that time been gradually recovering my strength, and I am now by the assistance of one of my Children able occasionally to go into another chamber, tho' I still continue in a state of great weakness. I hope you, my dear Brother, remain as well as when I last heard from you. . . .

The public are at present rejoicing at the late success of the allied armies in Europe. To-morrow is appointed as a day of public religious festivity. There is to be an address suited to the occasion, by Mr. C. at the Chapel. This will be deliver'd by a young Gentleman, Mr. A., a connection of this family. I shall request him to deliver a Sermon lately published by our friend Mr. Carey. Should he not visit C. it can be left at Mr. W.'s counting-room.

To my dear Brother and Sister, my correspondent Frances, and every branch of your numerous and respectable family I wish to be affectionately and particularly remember'd, and to every one of the little folks a kiss and a blessing from Grandmama, the appellation by which I am distinguished here. When you have an opportunity mention me affectionately to my Brother T. and wife and little Son, of course.

Again farewell, my dear friends.

S. B.

A short time before his mother's death Charles Bulfinch had met with a series of reverses, which he describes in this passage:—

"I continued my town employment and the direction of a succession of works in Architecture, of private houses and several churches, and other public buildings, which gave us a comfortable support, until I was again engaged in an

undertaking that promised well. It was the filling up of flats, which I had retained, because considered as of no value, and extending Charles Street to West Boston bridge. I was encouraged to this undertaking by the proceedings of the Company of Messrs. Otis, Mason & Joy, who had formed in the same way a large tract of land from which it was supposed they would realize great profits. I accordingly made great efforts to continue the project, and just when I had completed a junction with the bridge and offered a plan of lots for sale, the aspect of affairs in our country was again clouded by the affair of the Frigate Chesapeake, and that of the President with the British ship *Little Belt*, and the declaration of war which soon followed. This again produced another stagnation of business. The Company of Otis & Co., men of large capital, were able to wait for better times for sale of their lands, from which they have since realized immense profit, but no sales could be then made by me, and demands were pressing with accumulating interest, so that I was obliged once more to surrender all property, and was even more reduced than before, and we were obliged to leave our neat and commodious home for a humbler and inferior one. Our income was reduced by the effects of a lameness brought on by a bad fall, which prevented that degree of personal activity for which I had been distinguished, and also by other competitors in works of architecture.

“We continu’d to bear these changes of circumstances with cheerful submission, my dear wife consenting to take charge of two young ladies as boarders, to add to our income.”

To this period belong the following paragraphs from Hannah Bulfinch’s note-book. Since we quoted last from its pages three more children had come to their home,—

Francis Vaughan, born in 1803, John Apthorp in 1806, and Stephen Greenleaf in 1809.

The hopes of the parents for another daughter were not to be realized. Especially when Apthorp was born, who became one of the most deeply loved of all the children, had they wished for a girl instead. But the little Greenleaf<sup>1</sup> followed next, and continued to hold his place as the youngest:—

“July, 1811. In a life of vicissitude we become habituated to change, and our feelings resign themselves calmly to what is inevitable. This year has brought with it many cares; our country disturbed in its politicks, unsettled in its foreign arrangements, involves individuals in distress. *We* have felt a large share of the public embarrassment, and my Husband, disappointed in his reasonable hopes, has been obliged to submit himself to his creditors, and to go into confinement for a month. How gladly would he pay his engagements if it were in his power! How unwilling would he be to use another with this unchristian rigour! But the trial is over, he returns to the bosom of his family, and they once more enjoy serenity and content, soothed by the kindness of friends and acquitted by our consciences of intentional error; we resolve to live with great economy till all debts are settled, and to receive all our luxuries from the growing virtues of our children.

“March, 1812. The past months since the above have been passed with great tranquillity, the peace and quiet which generally follow a storm. We have suffered much from our separation, but once again united we hope no more to part in this world. We have had since then good health, better spirits, which, with a rational mode of passing our time, has ensured our content. To-morrow will renew

<sup>1</sup> Whose christening his grandmother has described.

the season of Electing the town officers. If my Husband should be left out, we then lose our usual mode of support, but another mode will no doubt be obtained, and as we have been thus far provided for we trust still to be so. I desire to leave this event with all others to my heavenly friend, and hope to bring my mind to submit in everything to his will.

“June, 1813. Our country involved in war with Great Britain leaves us still an unhappy, divided people, many taking part with the mother country, many turning their hearts against her as the cause of all our ills. The loss of union, the absence of peace, is deplorable, but never should we record the judgments of our God without at the same time remembering his mercies. No bloody scenes have yet shocked our eyes. War is yet confined to our western and southern states. They invited it. They now more particularly suffer under its calamities. We in a domestic sense enjoy many blessings, though an unfortunate fall has confined my Husband to the house these three last months. The Spring has been pleasant, his health is good, and we hope to see him about again as usual. Friends have distinguished themselves by their kindness, and our four eldest Children are now so well able to assist themselves and their father, though not in a pecuniary way, yet by dutiful conduct and kind attentions, that much comfort is afforded to him and myself through their means. Well principled and amiable young persons.

“October, 1815. Our country again enjoys the blessing of peace; a prosperous summer has reviv'd the hopes of the husbandman. Our own prospects are much the same. The pressure of creditors has oblig'd us to remove into a smaller house, but united among ourselves we enjoy a calm and serene life, unembitter'd except by the idea that we are

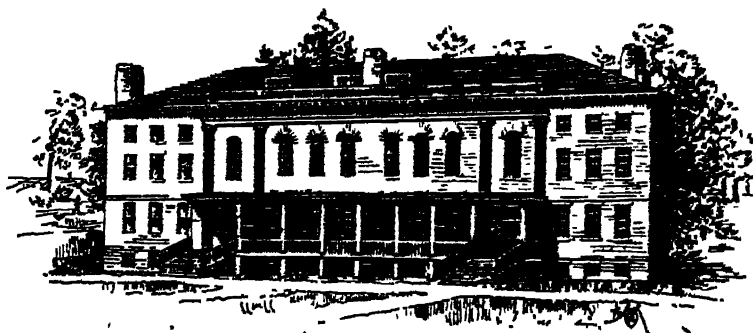
not able to pay our just debts. We must wait till it is our happy lot to do this, and again feel independent of unfeeling creditors. My Husband has a prospect of again using his limbs freely, having been lame nearly three years."

This accident was the result of slipping on the ice when ascending the steps of Faneuil Hall one winter morning, by which he fractured the bones of his leg in such a manner as to produce permanent lameness.

The tradition current in the family regarding Mr. Bulfinch's confinement for debt has been that he was obliged to live during a certain period "within prison limits," an arrangement not uncommon at that time, when imprisonment, with varying degrees of strictness and hardship, was the penalty paid for failure to meet business obligations, whether it were one's fault or one's misfortune.

His wife's words, however, bear a different interpretation, and certainly show that he was separated from her and from his family during the interval. His accident, occurring two years later, and preventing his engaging in active pursuits, with the necessity of living again in a narrow way, made fresh demands upon her fortitude and cheerfulness. But she seems always to have carried in her breast that "Key called Promise" which guided her safely through these dark and perplexing days, and enabled her to sustain her husband under his trials.

The house the family removed to now was No. 3 Tremont Street, and is remembered by a relative still living as "a small house with a green front door, standing next to the old Museum building."



## CHAPTER VIII

### REMOVAL TO WASHINGTON

1815 – 1818

Who, if he rise to station of command,  
Rises by open means; and there will stand  
On honorable terms, or else retire,  
And in himself possess his own desire.

WORDSWORTH.

MR. BULFINCH now continues his narrative, which brings us to the end of his own memoir:—

“At the close of the war a project was started for building two hospitals, one for insane subjects, and the other with the title of the ‘General Hospital,’ and by the influence of my brother Coolidge I was sent by the board of agents to view the hospitals of New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore, to observe their construction and to get a knowledge of the detail of their expenses and management. This commission was accepted by me willingly, as a proof of the continued confidence of the most respectable members of our community. I proceeded to execute it, and made reports of my proceedings on my return that I believe were quite satisfactory.



"When at Baltimore, being so near Washington city, I determined to visit it, and passed three days there. I was much gratified by my view of the situation, and in seeing Congress in session, and left the city without any expectation of visiting it again, but it was so ordered that this visit led to the most important consequences. I was introduced by one of our Senators, Mr. Lloyd, to Mr. Monroe, President elect; he received me kindly, expressed his approval of the objects of my journey, and afterwards directed Col. Lane, Commissioner of the Public Buildings, to conduct me over the ruins of the Capitol. This was on January 7, 1817; on the following July, Mr. Monroe visited Boston, as President of the United States; a large Committee was appointed by the Town to receive him, and I as Chairman of the Selectmen and Committee read to him the address of the Town before a large concourse of people assembled in the floor of their Exchange Coffee house. My duty as Chairman led me to be almost constantly in company with the President during his visit of about a week, after which I proceeded in my usual course, making drawings and directing workmen at the Insane hospital in Charlestown.

"About November following, I received a letter from William Lee, Esq., one of the Auditors at Washington, and in the confidence of the President, stating the probability of the removal of Mr. Latrobe, the architect of the Capitol, and proposing that I should apply for the place. I declined making any application that might lead to Mr. Latrobe's removal; but before the end of the year, disagreements between him and the Commissioner became so serious that he determined to resign, and his resignation was immediately accepted. On receiving information of this, in another letter from Mr. Lee, I made regular application through J. Q. A., Secretary of State, and by return of Post

received notice from him of my appointment, with a salary of \$2,500 and expenses paid of removal of family and furniture."

We have now given the concluding passages of my grandfather's brief narrative. At the time when it was written, the experiences of his later life were fresh in the minds of his family, and he naturally felt that there was no need for repeating what was already familiar.

The visit of President Monroe to Boston is still within the memory of the very oldest of our citizens. He was the unanimous choice of both political parties, and it was that "era of good feeling" which was strengthened by the universal joy at the restoration of peace. The reception of the President was as imposing as the resources of the town then permitted. It is well described by some who stood among the school children on the Common that bright day in July, arranged in lines to form an avenue for the cavalcade to pass through. The children carried red and white roses, and the splendid uniform of the Hussars as they rode under the arching trees made a brilliant picture whose colors have lasted for three quarters of a century.

Of the two hospitals, the McLean Asylum for the Insane, at Somerville, — then Charlestown, — was opened for the reception of patients in 1818. The trustees had purchased the fine country-seat built by Mr. Joseph Barrell in 1792, from designs of Mr. Bulfinch, who now made the additions required by the needs of the hospital.

Two wings of brick were built, each 76 feet by 40, and, from the nature of the ground, several feet lower than the level of the mansion. They would naturally have formed a right angle with the main building, but two rows of very fine shade-trees would in that case have been sacrificed, and the wings were therefore built symmetrically at a

slightly larger angle. Mr. Bulfinch does not appear to be responsible for the domes added some years later to obtain more light at the intersection of these buildings with the central one.

The accommodations of the Asylum were enlarged subsequently to its opening, at the desire and suggestion of its first physician and superintendent, Dr. Rufus Wyman.

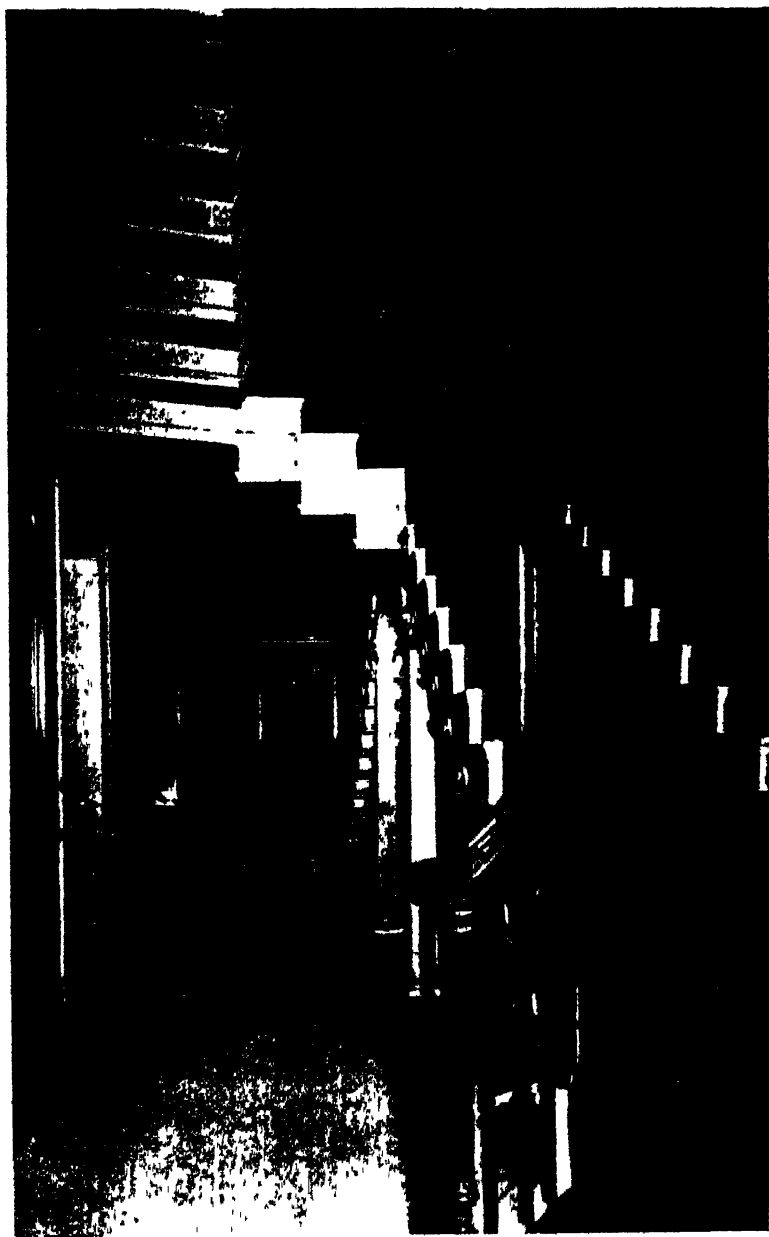
Few estates near Boston could then show so much beauty of situation and architecture as this. The view from the eminence where the Asylum stood was extensive and lovely, and the grounds were made attractive by fine trees, and by the garden with its fish-pond and with a summer-house half buried in roses. The remains of ancient fortifications were at that time still shown on the height.

The interior of the mansion was in the most elegant style. There may yet be seen specimens of Charles Bulfinch's characteristic work, and one of his most beautiful staircases, which it seems a pity should be destroyed when the hospital is removed to the new location at Belmont, made necessary by the changes in the once lovely hill, the immense network of railroads that surrounds it, and the din and smoke of the encroaching city.

The two divisions of this original and curious staircase ascend by easy steps, with a slight curve, from opposite ends of the elliptical entrance hall, thirty-two feet in length, and meet upon a platform supported by four fluted columns with an elliptical arch, beneath which one passes from the vestibule to the drawing-room. A short flight of four steps leads from this platform to a second one, and from this again three short flights conduct the visitor to different points of the gallery that runs around the hall at the level of the second floor, the whole apparently relying for support upon the above-mentioned columns.

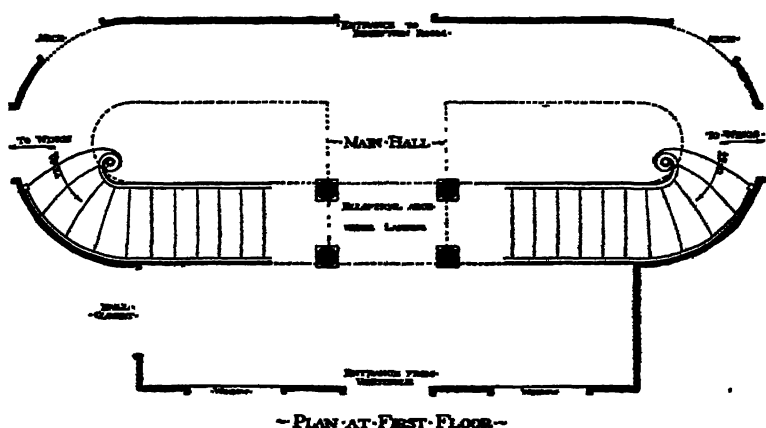
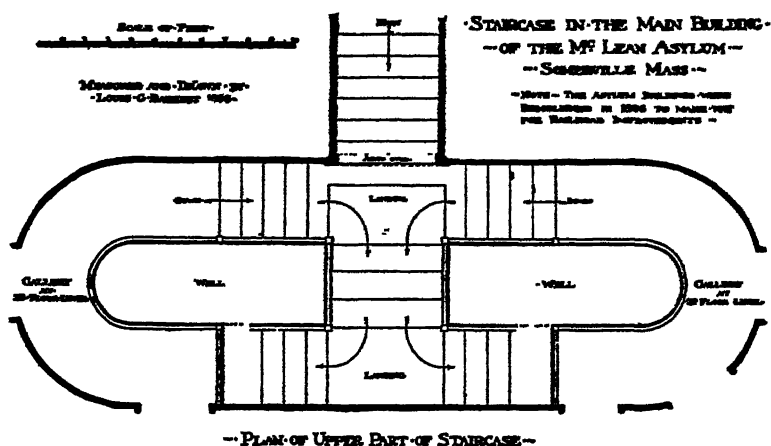






STAIRCASE, McLEAN ASYLUM, SOMERVILLE





The details of this hall, and also of the beautiful drawing-room, a perfect ellipse, with its panelled wainscotting, cornice, and "coved" ceiling and its two curious fireplaces, are in the finest classical style.

The Massachusetts General Hospital, one of the architect's most important works, a fine building of Chelmsford granite, was erected on what was known at the time as "Prince's Pasture." The corner-stone was laid in 1818,



and it was completed in 1821. It has received the highest encomiums, and at the time of its building was even called "the finest public or private edifice in New England." Mr. Willard observes that, if thus ranked above the State House in excellence, it must have owed its dignity to its fine masonry and the more classic character of its dome.

The General Hospital received the addition of two wings in 1844, and has otherwise been enlarged and extended.

Although Mr. Bulfinch carries his autobiography no farther, there came with his removal to Washington a series of letters which enable us to continue the history. The official correspondence regarding his appointment as architect of the Capitol has been preserved, with Mr. Lee's letters, and those written by my grandfather himself to his family until they joined him in their new home.

The first letter we give was written during his first visit to the capital, when there was as yet no idea of removing there.

TO MRS. H. BULFINCH.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 7, 1817.

MY DEAR FRIEND, — Immediately after closing my last, I left Baltimore for this city, and arrived here early in the afternoon of the same day. The country which I traversed was hilly and uninteresting, until I reached Bladensburg, the field of battle at the attack of the British. Nothing announces a metropolis until we approach an assemblage of brick houses, forming a village, and immediately contiguous to them two stone edifices of richly ornamented architecture. These are the wings of the Congress hall; they were burnt, as far as they were combustible, and are now undergoing repair. They have been chiseld in such a manner that all external marks of fire are removed. From this place, called Capitol hill, the ground suddenly falls,

on. — You must excuse or short letters when I perform any  
the inconvenient circumstances under which I write it. —  
I am sitting in a book seller's shop; which is, very full of cus-  
tomers, where I bought my paper & asked the favour of his  
Desk for a few minutes. — Alas I do; because my talent is  
entirely destitute of pen, ink or paper. To-morrow morning  
I shall be hurried, the weather has threatened other things  
some days have been cold, and if I experience no greater, in con-  
sequence that which I have yet feared, shall prove my self  
perfidiously fortunate. — Remember me to all.

Edw Bulfinch

and expands into an extensive vale, beautifully surrounded by high grounds and washed on one side by a majestic river. The view is beautiful, and one is immediately convinced that a great city must here grow up, and in anticipation we think we see it before us ; — not exactly so in reality ; the public buildings are distant two miles or more from each other, and a small village has grown around each. These are connected by spacious streets, lined with trees. The whole has an imposing air, especially while Congress is in session, from the number of carriages traversing the grand avenue.

But a truce to description. I must tell you that I have been fully gratified by my visit, have examined the public buildings in company with their architects, and have been favoured by them with the sight of their plans : their scale is vast and will produce grandeur in the execution : the public pride and purse will bear them out in the expense. I have visited the President and Mr. Monroe, was received with politeness and favour. Mr. Lloyd introduced me and has been uniformly attentive. I have also attended Mrs. Madison's drawing-room two evenings since, where I found a great display of beauty and a collection of distinguished persons from all parts of our country.

The Congress halls have had a share of my attention, but no debate of consequence has occurred to call forth the great speakers. You must excuse a short letter, when I inform you the inconvenient circumstances under which I write it. I am sitting in a bookseller's shop, which is half full of customers, where I bought my paper, and asked the favour of his desk for a few minutes : this I do because my tavern is utterly destitute of pen, ink or paper.

To-morrow morning I advance homeward. The weather has continued clear, though some days have been cold, and

if I experience no greater inconvenience than what has yet occurred, shall esteem myself particularly fortunate. Remember me to all.

FROM WILLIAM LEE, ESQ.

[Confidential.]

WASHINGTON, Sept. 14, 1817.

MY DEAR SIR, — I have good reasons for thinking that the President of the U. States will very soon after his return here displace Mr. Latrobe and the Commissioner charged with the execution of public buildings. He threatened to do it before his departure if they did not proceed with more harmony than they had done and with greater expedition with the Capitol. So far from this, things have gone on worse, and nothing has been done. I am sorry, for Latrobe, who is an amiable man, possesses genius and has a large family, but in addition to the President's not being satisfied with him there is an unaccountable and I think unjust prejudice against him by many members of the Government, Senate and Congress.

Should this change take place I shall be the first to know it, and if you will permit me, I will mention you to fill the place of architect to the government, and propose that both offices, that of Architect and Commissioner, should be blended together. The Salary will be increased to four or five thousand dollars. The Capitol will occupy you three or four years, after which you would be charged with the construction of public offices and four houses for the Secretaries of the departments, to which you might add the direction of the houses of individuals. In short, I think such a place would open a perspective to you well worth your consideration.

The climate of this place, against which there are such prejudices in New England, I think the best in the U.

States, and not inferior, perhaps preferable from April until December, to the boasted one of the South of France. Society is on the best footing and very good. I think this place offers an opening for one of your talents and acquirements to gain a solid reputation in the profession you have courted, provided your situation is not such as would require great sacrifices to embrace it. If, on reflection, the affair should be thought worth your attention, I will with your permission mention you to the President.

I am my dear Sir

With high esteem

Your very humble serv<sup>t</sup>

W<sup>m</sup> Lee.

A draft of a letter inscribed to Wm. Lee, Esq. Answer to his letter of September 14: —

Sept. 27, 1817.

The appointment which you propose has many attractions and strong inducements to please a more ambitious man than myself. It would be honourable, and furnish employment in the mode most agreeable to my taste and disposition, and in which I am sensible I could be of more use than in any other.

The aspect and situation of Washington I admire, and think that the climate and society do not deserve the prejudices entertained here against them; that its growth and improvement will be rapid, and would be a source of pleasure to any one who can honourably discharge the duties confided to him in bestowing to advantage the funds which the government is disposed to appropriate so liberally.

But there are objections which you will permit me to state, some of which you may be able to remove.

I have always endeavoured to avoid unpleasant competi-

tion with others, that by opposing their interest would excite enmity and ill will. I should much regret to be an instrument of depriving a man of undoubted talents of an employment which places him at the head of his profession and which is necessary to his family's support.

The situation of my own family demands particular attention. It consists of a daughter and six sons; my two eldest sons are of age, and have commenced business as importing hardware merchants; the general stagnation of business has prevented much profit hitherto; my third son has just completed his college course, and means to study a profession; the others are young and require attention to the early branches of education. Various disappointments in life have contracted our circle of acquaintance and made us very dependent on our family for enjoyments. My own views are confined to obtaining the simple comforts of life, but we naturally look to the establishment of our children for the reward of our cares, and would be sorry to take any measure that would separate us from them; or by removing them withdraw them from their natural protectors. I presume that business of the kind my sons are engaged in is on a very small scale at Washington, but do not know what encouragement it may meet in Alexandria or Georgetown. Should the prospect be favorable, one great objection of their mother would be removed. My college boy might pursue his studies there as well as here, and perhaps a greater career would be open to him: the younger lads may have sufficient advantages of schools, as I presume such are already established for the earlier branches of education. We have every reason to be satisfied with the character and conduct of our sons; two of them have received a College education and are of respectable talents; their mother's happiness is bound up in her children, and

the inducements must be very strong that could lead her to give up their society.

We have been accustomed for years to a circumscribed mode of living, and a very moderate income has sufficed, but both the scale of living and the rate of expense will be much increased at Washington. I calculate that 3,500 dollars will not more than maintain my family of ten persons with decent comfort (including rent and necessary carriage expenses) in a situation where we shall be compelled to mix with respectable society, and shall be particularly liable to the visits of strangers. Your own experience will be the best guide in this respect.

Your letter has encouraged hopes which I think might be realized; Mr. Adams (Secretary of State), Mr. Otis, Mr. Lloyd, Col. Trumbull, are my friends, and I think would give me their influence; and your good offices, from personal intimacy with the President, would be of material service. I think, too, the appointment would be popular in this section of the Union. You will then perhaps be surprized that I do not give an immediate assent. But the change proposed is so important, affecting so materially every branch of my family, that it requires deliberation; if our immediate decision is necessary I should be compelled to decline the nomination, but should be obliged if you would favor me with a reply, stating as many particulars as you are acquainted with, whether a vacancy will actually happen from motives entirely unconnected with me; and what are the prospects of business for a family situated as mine, and what the probable expense of living. We will seriously contemplate the change and advise with you on the means to effect it.

At present I can hardly realize the possibility of the offer; tho' Mr. Latrobe may have opponents, yet he and

his family have many friends, who upon the suggestion of the probability of loss of employment, would exert themselves in his favor, and pledge a greater attention to the wishes of his employers. But whether the offer should be officially made or not, I shall always bear in mind the friendship and good opinion which induced your communication; and believe me, one of the strongest inducements of Mrs. Bulfinch and daughter and myself to accept the call would be the prospect of intercourse with your family.

FROM WILLIAM LEE.

WASHINGTON, Oct<sup>r</sup> 1, 1817.

MY DEAR SIR, — I have this moment been favored with your letter of the 27th ult.

As I expected, the President on his return gave symptoms of being about to discharge Latrobe, but the friends of that gentleman interposed and a commission has been appointed, composed of Gen. Mason, Mr. Graham and Col. Bomford, to examine into the state of the Capitol and report thereon to the President, on his return. Either the Commissioner of public buildings or Latrobe must go out. . . . As he (the Commissioner) has more friends than the Architect, he will, I think, be continued. I do not know how it is, but so it is, Latrobe has many enemies; his great fault is being poor. He is, in my opinion, an amiable, estimable man, full of genius and at the head of his profession. Every carpenter and mason thinks he knows more than Latrobe, and such men have got on so fast last year with the President's house (a mere lathing and plastering job) that they have the audacity to think they ought to have the finishing of the Capitol, a thing they are totally unfit for. That superb pile ought to be finished in a manner to do credit to the country and the age.



While the President was here, you were mentioned in case Latrobe should be forced to retire, and I was happy to find Col. Bomford and others thought such a selection would be judicious. In the course of a few weeks we shall know the result, and if I find a change is to take place and that the salary will be raised to \$4,000, I shall press your nomination.

I came here with all our northern prejudices against Washington, and I do assure you I am agreeably disappointed. The climate is delightful, not in my opinion equalled by any in the U. States; the society is good and such a family as yours may live here for \$3,000 a year in the best manner. You would, I think, find a better field here for your sons in business than in Boston. Education is on a good footing, and the regular rise of property would furnish you with opportunity of making judicious purchases. If once established here, all the public may hereafter do would no doubt be confided to you, and you would besides have a great share of all the private business in your line.

If it should be decided that Latrobe must resign, I think in justice to your family you ought to come here. Before Mr. Lloyd leaves Boston, mention the subject to him. He has more influence here and is more respected than any of our members from the North. Mr. King and Trumbull from New York would, I am sure, give you their support, and their opinion would have great weight.

As is customary in such cases, you had better address a letter to the President on the subject immediately, stating that you have learnt (such) a change is to take place, in which case you offer your services.

Refer him to Mr. Lloyd, Otis, King, Trumbull, Col.

Bomford and myself, and I have but little doubt of your success.

I am my dear Sir, with  
high regard and esteem  
yours truly  
W<sup>m</sup> LEE.

Draft of a letter in reply to the above : —

BOSTON, Oct<sup>r</sup>. 17, 1817.

DEAR SIR, — My thoughts have been occupied on the subject of your very friendly letter of the 1st inst. ever since its receipt. I had once determined to write to Hon. J. Q. Adams, to solicit his influence, but on further reflection, think best to wait the decision of the Commissioners; whenever that is known I will confide in your judgment and friendship to take suitable measures, either to propose a nomination immediately or to give me some such authorized suggestion as would justify me in consulting my friends and making arrangements, if they should advise my application.

But, my dear Sir, I must avow to you that I could not leave this place without making provision for the discharge of some pressing demands, — and probably it would be necessary to ask the advance of some months' salary, or an allowance for the expense of removing a family. You are acquainted with the disposition and practise of the government in these respects, and on your advice and assistance I should depend.

FROM WILLIAM LEE.

WASHINGTON, Oct<sup>r</sup>. 23, 1817.

MY DEAR SIR, — Your favor of the 17th has been receiv'd. The President arrived here on the 19th and as I expected his first attention was directed to the Capitol.

Yesterday the Commissioners met at his house and they have determined to continue Latrobe in his employ. I am convinced however, myself, that either Latrobe or Col. Lane must go out. They never can get along together, and it would give me great pleasure to see you, for the honor of old New England, in one or the other situation.

I wish you would write a letter to the President, stating to him that it is reported a change is to take place, offering your services and referring to Mr. Lloyd, Otis, Trumbull, and myself. These things are done every day, and my full belief is you will be named before the rising of Congress.

When that body gets together, they will make a noise about the little progress that has been made with the Capitol.

The President, I understand, will recommend to Congress to build four houses, for the heads of departments, and some additional public offices.

Should you be named our architect or commissioner for public buildings in the course of the winter, I will undertake to arrange affairs for you on the score of finance.

With great regard and esteem

I am my dear Sir

Yours truly  
W<sup>m</sup> LEE.

Draft of letter in reply : —

TO WILLIAM LEE.

Nov. 15.

I was not surprized at the determination of the Commissioners to continue Mr. Latrobe in employment. I think his talents entitle him to the place, and that he is the most proper person to rebuild what he had once so well effected. There were many difficulties attending my removal, which perhaps would have been insurmountable, though I should

think it my duty to make every exertion for the good of my family.

I believe it is my destiny to remain here, and should be much indebted if you would continue your good offices so far as to think of me if any employment should occur in this place to which I should be qualified. It is probable that a bankrupt system will be adopted at the next meeting of Congress. Should that be the case and the appointment of officers under it be vested in the President, your nomination of me might be of material benefit. My pursuits have been of a nature to be essentially affected by the aspect of public affairs, — an enterprise which promised well was completely frustrated and involved me in loss from the depreciation of real property occasioned by the war. Still, as the public has been benefitted by my efforts, I am sanguine enough to think that any moderately productive employment conferred on me would meet the approbation of all parties.

FROM HON. HARRISON GRAY OTIS.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 2, 1817.

DEAR SIR, — I received your favor last evening upon my arrival here. This morning I called on the President in the palace, and there being only one gentleman, Mr. Burrell, with me, I took occasion in speaking of the state of the building to observe that Mr. Latrobe had resigned, and that I did not know whether his place could be supplied without looking to Boston.

He then asked if I alluded to Mr. Bulfinch. I answered affirmatively. He replied, "Sir, we are looking to him, but Mr. Latrobe is a great loss, and it will require perhaps two persons to supply his place, and we think also of a Mr. Macomb; what is your opinion of Mr. B.'s qualifications?"

I then gave him a full statement of my acquaintance with you and your family, your character, qualifications, former prospect, and present circumstances, and my opinion that you would accept the appointment if it could be made an object. To this he was pleased to answer that he was much gratified by the conversation, that it was very seasonable, that he had already instructed the Commissioner (Mr. Lane) to write to you, and added, "We can give him, Sir, 2,500 dollars per annum, and pay all the expense of removing him and his family."

He also said he had received your letter. I am thus led to suppose that the business may be considered as done, and that it will depend upon yourself entirely whether to come hither or not, and should think you would not hesitate.

There must inevitably be some incidental advantages attending the appointment, and it appears to promise a respectable establishment for yourself and interesting family, suited to their merits, which it would give me real pleasure to see realized.

I am D<sup>r</sup> Sir, respect<sup>y</sup>

Yr friend and obed. ser.

H. G. OTIS.

COL. SAMUEL LANE TO COL. NEHEMIAH FREEMAN.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 3, 1817.

DR. SIR,—The President has referred to me a letter from Mr. Charles Bulfinch of your town, offering to undertake the duties of architect at the Capitol. The high character which I had previously received of Mr. Bulfinch's professional qualifications did not leave room to hesitate in conferring on him the appointment. Will you therefore have the goodness to make use of an early opportunity of announcing this to that gentleman; and at the same time

apprize him that the Salary attached to the office is but \$2,500 per annum, payable quarterly, that the appointment is entirely at the disposal of the Commissioner of Public Buildings, and that of consequence the architect must be responsible to him.

If, after this explanation, Mr. Bulfinch should be willing to accept the place, please to request that he will inform me so immediately, and mention the time when he may be expected to arrive here, which I hope will be as early as circumstance will admit.

You may add that I will defray the expense of conveying himself, family and furniture to this place.

With great respect, Dr. Sir,

Your obt. svt.

SAM<sup>L</sup> LANE,  
Comm. Public Buildings.

FROM WILLIAM LEE.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 4, 1817.

MY DEAR SIR, — Col. Lane has written to you, and I understand from the President has been authorized to offer you \$2,500 per annum and your expenses on here. This is not enough, but I find it is as much as they can do under existing circumstances. . . .

Besides this salary, \$500 at least must be allowed you for a draftsman, and you would be at liberty to exercise your talents for individuals, which at 5 per cent. on their expenditures in erecting their houses, the usual commission, would amount to something in the course of the year. This is my view of the affair. You must now draw your own conclusions. You will see that the President has recommended to Congress to build houses for the heads of departments, which will naturally fall under your direction

and be an additional reason for the augmentation of your salary. . . .

I am very truly yours,

WM. LEE.

FROM HON. JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,

WASHINGTON, 4 Dec. 1817.

SIR,—I have received your Letter of the 26th ult. and am happy to have it in my power to inform you that the office of Architect of the public buildings at this place is offered to your acceptance, with a Salary of 2,500 dollars a year, and the expenses of your removal with your family to this City to be paid. It is the wish of the President and of Col. Lane, the Commissioner of Public Buildings, that you should come on as soon as it may suit your convenience.

I am, with great respect, Sir, your very humble and obedient Servant,

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

TO COL. SAMUEL LANE.

BOSTON, Dec<sup>r</sup>. 12, 1817.

SIR,—Major Freeman has communicated to me the contents of your letter of the 3rd inst., announcing my appointment as Architect of the Capitol, of which I had been previously informed by an official letter from John Quincy Adams, Esq. I feel sensibly the honour done me and consider it my duty to accept the invitation.

The occupation of my time and attention to close a variety of concerns in business will prevent my reaching Washington before the first week in January, when, unless prevented by some unforeseen circumstance, I hope to pay you my respects in person.

I should be obliged if you could place at my disposal the

sum of Three hundred dollars to be accounted for in expenses of removal.

With great respect, your obed. serv.

TO HON. JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

SIR, — I have been favoured with your official communication of the 4th inst., informing me that the President of the United States has been pleased to offer me the situation of Architect of the public buildings.

I feel sensibly grateful for this mark of confidence and consider it my Duty to accept the call, although the salary does not equal what I had been led to expect. I find so many claims to attention to close a variety of objects of business, both of a public and private nature, that it will not be in my power to reach Washington before the first week in January, when I hope to have the honour of handing to you the papers relating to the Columbia's voyage to the N. W. Coast of America.

Letter of appointment from the Commissioner, January 8, 1818: —

TO CHARLES BULFINCH, Esquire.

*Sir,* — Having entire confidence in your professional talents and integrity, I have appointed you Architect of the Capitol of the United States, to discharge all the duties and to receive the emoluments attached to this appointment. Your Salary to commence the 11th day of December last past.

Given under my hand at the City of Washington, the 8th day of January, 1818.

SAMUEL LANE,  
Commiss. Public Buildings.



Immediately on receiving his appointment, Mr. Bulfinch went on to Washington, travelling with dispatch, and accompanied by his son George, then a youth in college.

He writes as follows to his wife after their arrival : —

WEDNESDAY 7<sup>th</sup> Jan<sup>y</sup>. [1818].

We have been admitted to-day to an interview with the President: after passing up a noble stairway through a suite of elegant rooms, we found him seated alone in a most splendid apartment, covered with a rich blue paper, with broad gold borders, and gold flowers at suitable intervals. My reception was honourable and perfectly satisfactory, it was even cordial; the President expressed himself gratified at my acceptance of the office, and hoped advantage would arise from it to myself as well as to the government. He entered fully on the subject of the public buildings, and without mentioning the particular causes of offence with the late architect, clearly evinced that he was not satisfied with his conduct or plans, while he gave him credit for professional skill. The President said that immediately on a vacancy occurring, his attention had been turned to me, and that the offer would have been made if I had not applied; he promised me his support, and invited me to frequent calls and personal application to him. I introduced George, who was graciously received, and we took our leave, well pleased with our reception.

*Thursday.* Having lost some time yesterday in attempting to see Mr. Adams at his public office, we determined to call early to-day at his house, not far from our lodgings, for the purpose of handing to him the papers on the N. W. concern; we were admitted to his family room and I delivered and explained the papers. George also handed to him his testimonials of character, which we left with him

to examine. After these essential calls I proceeded to take possession of my office, a room in the Capitol about 20 by 25 feet, and 20 high, built wholly of brick and stone, and arched with the same; covered with plain stucco, even the walls, ceiling and floor, which bear marks of smoke and the ravages of fire. This room is my own, and is accommodated with tables, desks for drawing, paper of all sizes, and instruments and implements for work. A fire is made in this room every morning, and from 10 to 3 are considered the office hours. I have been introduced to the head workmen in each branch and have visited the workshops with them — these are sheds adjacent to the great building; I find about 120 men now employed, principally in cutting stone, and forming and polishing the great marble columns: a number of sculptors are busy, some carving capitals, others making allegorical bas-reliefs to be placed in various parts, and some at work on a colossal figure of Liberty — 12 feet high, to stand in the Representatives' room, raised over the Speaker's chair — these things show you the scale on which we are proceeding. All my time on Wednesday, not occupied by the call on the President, was spent in exploring this building, in company with the principal surveyor, whose room adjoins mine. He is an intelligent, middle-aged man who has already made on me a favourable impression. Without such a guide it would be impossible for a stranger to tread the mazes of this labyrinth; since this inspection of things as they are, I have received from Col. Lane a great number of drawings, exhibiting the work already done, and other parts proposed, but not decided on.

At the first view of these drawings, my courage almost failed me — they are beautifully executed, and the design is in the boldest stile — after longer study I feel better

satisfied and more confidence in meeting public expectation. There are certainly faults enough in Latrobe's designs to justify the opposition to him. His stile is calculated for display in the greater parts, but I think his staircases in general are crowded, and not easy of access, and the passages intricate and dark. Indeed, the whole interior, except the two great rooms, has a sombre appearance. I feel the responsibility resting on me, and should have no resolution to proceed if the work was not so far commenced as to make it necessary to follow the plans already prepared for the wings; as to the centre building, a general conformity to the other parts must be maintained. I shall not have credit for invention, but must be content to follow in a prescribed path: as my employers have experienced so much uneasiness of late, they are disposed to view me and my efforts with complacency.

I was gratified on Friday with your long letter, dated Monday, 29th. We had become impatient and had been twice to the post office. On reading it, we felt ourselves reinstated in your dear circle. My foregoing statements will give the best answer to your inquiries respecting feelings and prospects; I shall keep you informed of everything that may occur, and am disposed to look on the favourable side. Charles must not be impatient; it will take some time to make acquaintance with persons on whose information I can rely; my thoughts have as yet been wholly occupied by my own duties; I find the distances between persons and places as inconvenient as ever; our mornings commence late, our dining hour the same, seldom before four, [so] that the day appears short and no great progress can be made: he may rely, however, on my attention, for his good and that of each of you is very near my heart, and no gratification could equal that of

once more assembling our dear circle. *Sunday.* We have this day attended service in the Congress hall; it was respectably filled with many of the members, and a number of the inhabitants of the vicinity, among whom were many genteel and well dressed females. The service was the Episcopal form of afternoon prayer, singing without any instrumental music, and for want of books, two lines at a time of the psalm read off by the chaplain, to guide the congregation: an excellent sermon on the "foolishness of preaching" closed the duties of the day, which were conducted with great propriety and serious effect. After service I was recognized by several gentlemen from your quarter, and we paid a visit, at their lodgings, to some others.

*Monday.* I have visited with the superintendent all parts of the President's house. This building does not form any part of my concern or impose any duties upon me; but I thought it best to become acquainted with it. I found it spacious and noble, well arranged both for parade and family convenience; the finishing and furnishings rich but not heavy; the walls generally of plain grounds, blue or green, with as much of gilding as to give to each apartment the air of a palace. After viewing the kitchens, out grounds and intended improvements, I walked to the Patent office to arrange some business for Mr. Jackson of the Waltham factory. Here I was introduced to Dr. Thornton, head of the office, a very singular character: the Dr. gave the original design for the building of the Capitol, and is very decided in finding fault with Latrobe for the changes he has introduced in it; on returning to my office, your letter and one from Uncle Storer were handed to me. Your expressions relating to my escape from our perilous situation in the stage recall my own feelings on that occa-

sion. Let us be grateful, but I am sometimes tempted to think that if Mr. Dana's accident had happened to me it would have been a complete justification of my return to the bosom of domestic quiet and happy mediocrity. Tell Uncle S. that I thank him for his kind letter and will answer it soon : hope to receive a rich treat from all of you by Mr. Otis. Last evening being very mild and pleasant, we undertook a walk of near 2 miles to Mr. Lee's ; found them *en famille*, and passed a couple of hours with them pleasantly and walked home. I shall not, however, attempt such expeditions very often ; every circumstance of weather and moonlight combined to favour us, and I bore the exertion well. This morning, the ground is covered with a thin coat of snow, and the air is clear and sharp. I am surprized to find how uniform is the weather in so great an extent of country ; the remarkable cold of the Sunday before I left you was equally felt here, and I find you have since been favoured with the same genial air which we thought we had gained in a southern climate.

You will find that I have endeavoured to carry you with me in my daily progress hitherto, but you must not expect so great variety in future. The Committee of Congress begin to ask for estimates &c. which will occupy my time in a more systematic manner. One thing I wish to *impress* on you, that you must now remember that I am a *public* man, and that on no account will it be proper for anything I may say to be put into the public papers. You will, I know, be cautious—*verbum sat*—and I have room only for one word more.

Ever yours,

C. BULFINCH.

Feb<sup>y</sup> 1, 1818

MY DEAR FRIEND, — I thank you for deciding to send yours of the 1st inst. (ult. ?) by post ; Mr. Phillips has not yet appeared among us, detained I presume by the attractions of the cities which he must pass through.

I read your letter with great interest ; Susan's cough, I hope it is gone, or she must hasten to this fine climate. Your suggestions on the future destiny of our sons show that they are a principal subject of thought with you as they are with me ; on this head I intend to write them, and give them all the information yet collected. Thomas' postscript really surprized me. The acceptance of the plan for the hospital was quite beyond my expectation. I confess however that it gratifies me, but more on my children's account than my own. They will feel pleasure that my last act for Boston is accepted under circumstances which preclude the possibility of personal influence.

*Sunday morning.* Mr. Phillips has just handed me the valuable packet intrusted to him ; we have read your letters and in the course of the day shall re-peruse them more than once ; I was greatly affected at the mention of the dangerous situation of Bradford : his charming disposition and fine talents, together with his intimacy with Thomas, and the degree of acquaintance I had formed with him at the school, all conspired to make me feel for him as a relation, and enter truly into the feelings of his father.

We have now been here a month, and it is time to give you some more distinct ideas of the advantages and inconveniences of the place. Of the climate, I have said much in commendation already, and the persons who are residents here speak of it with unqualified praise ; — the views and prospects are fine even now and must be very delightful in summer, and will improve with the growth of the place and improved cultivation.

Society is on a pleasant and independent footing: there is full opportunity to engage in a constant succession of parties, particularly in winter; but the doing so is left to every one's choice. The markets are well supplied and are conveniently distributed about the city, and provisions of the common kind are not unreasonably high. *Of the inconveniences.* Among the principal we must state the distance between friends and the different places of resort. The walking is good in good weather, but rain or thawing weather makes it intolerably muddy, and it will be long before any continued pavement will be laid in so extended and straggling a place. Hackney carriages are often necessary and are to be had readily, but they are expensive, especially for evening use, when they are allowed double prices. There are a number of places of public worship, of various denominations, but all agreeing in circulating the most Trinitarian and Calvinistic opinions. The places of worship are small, and no parish is large enough to give a living to tempt any man of superior talents to fix with them, indeed they are all obliged to follow some other calling to enable them to gain a support: most of them keep private schools, but several are writers in the public offices during the week. Schools are distributed over the place, but not free of expense as among us; they are at various prices. One of the best is near our lodgings, at 9 dollars a quarter.

The place of worship which we generally attend is the Congress hall service, by the Chaplain; this is the nearest to us and the society, those whom we most frequently meet with, during the week. We have attended once at the new church, near the President's house, a very beautiful little building,—this church is frequented by the genteel society of the place. It is furnished with a small organ, the only one here, but the preacher is so violent in express-

ing his condemnation of all of different tenets from his own, that our townsman, J<sup>n</sup> Mason Esq. requested one of the wardens to endeavour to controul his zeal, or at least the harshness of his expressions.

You know the feelings with which I left Boston. There was much of regret at quitting old friends and old scenes, and as much of apprehension as of hope respecting our future prospects. I must continue to say that a respectable employment with competent income, among old friends, would be more gratifying than a change at my time of life and with so numerous a family; but as circumstances have so decidedly led to this change we must accommodate ourselves to it, and I ought to acknowledge that my duties are not so burthensome as I feared, and that if my family can be placed around me there would be every reason to look forward with pleasant anticipations. I have made inquiry respecting houses and am told that it will be easy to get one after the session of Congress but not before: there are, however, two now finishing, near the Capitol; either of them would suit us, and I am to see the owner to know his terms and when they can be ready. The rent of a moderately sized house is 300 dollars.

The procuring of servants I fear will be one of the most troublesome circumstances attending our residence here: there are no white female domestics to be had, and very difficult to hire free blacks. The usual way here is to purchase the time of a female, say, 5 or 6 years, and they are very useful and faithful, knowing that they will be free at a certain period, but on this head I must make further inquiries, and inform you.

Furniture of the common kind may be bought here as cheap as with you, which will prevent the necessity of your buying any, especially as the freight and risk of injury are



to be considered. But on this and some other heads I shall get more particular information.

I have been wholly engaged in preparing estimates for finishing the two wings of the Capitol, and I have handed them to the Commissioner, amount, 180,000 dollars, exclusive of furniture. This business has so occupied me that I must offer it in excuse for delaying to give you the above particulars before. I have commenced a letter to Charles and Thomas respecting business, but cannot complete it by this post. Shall send it to-morrow or next day.

*Tuesday.* The weather yesterday was as cold as it usually is with you in the coldest season, with very high wind. The wind is lulled, but the cold continues: if it moderates at noon I intend to call on the President, and to introduce Mr. Phillips. He is situated in very pleasant and genteel lodgings, not far from us.

Adieu.

Prices of articles of provision at Washington:—

Beef, roasting, select pieces, Per lb.  $12\frac{1}{2}$  cts.

Mutton,  $12\frac{1}{2}$  cts.

Pork, roasting pieces, 12 to 15 cts.

Veal, do do do

Lamb, hindquarter, 75 cts., forequarter \$1.00.

Turkeys, 1 dollar each, of 5 to 6 lbs.

Geese, 75 cts. to 1 dollar — small geese.

Fowls, 75 cts. to 1 dollar pair.

Vegetables, turnips and carrots, 1 dollar, potatoes 75 cts. bushel.

Flour, 10 dollars per barrel. — superfine.

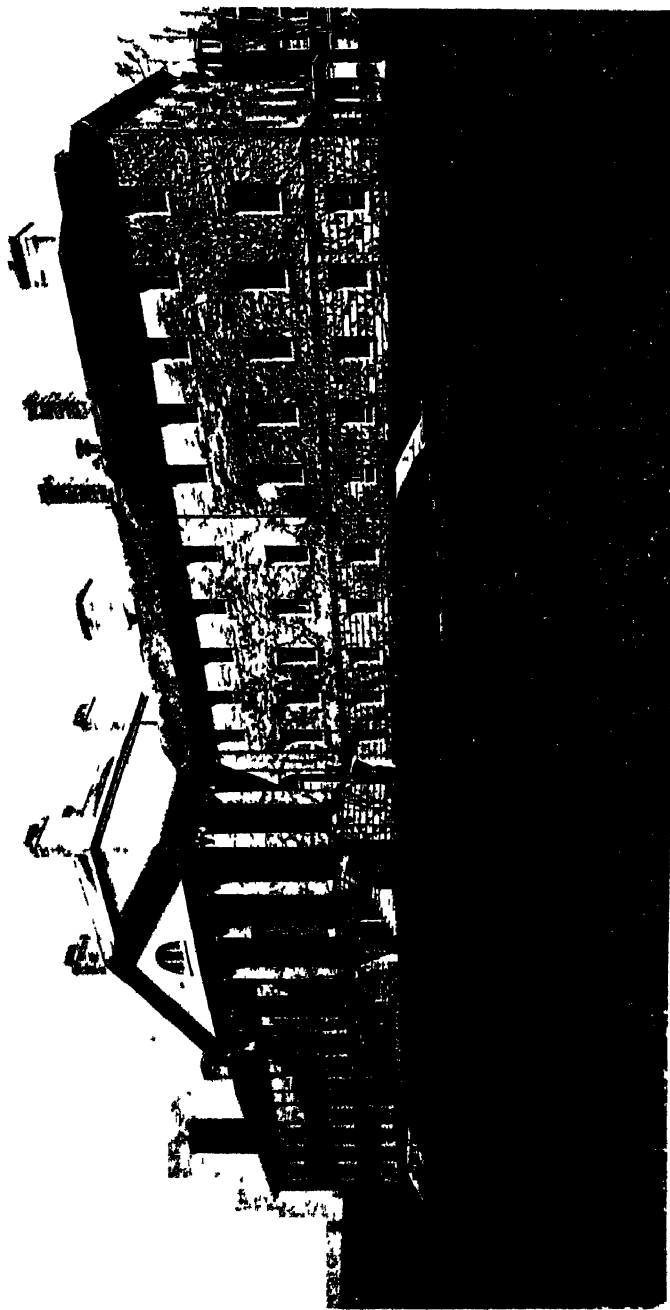
Indian meal,  $1\frac{1}{4}$  dollars per bushel.

Butter, 38 to 50 cts.

Eggs, 30 do







**MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL HOSPITAL, BOSTON**

The wings were extended and the pediment changed after Mr Bulfinch's time



Milk,  $12\frac{1}{2}$  cts. per quart.

Firewood of dry oak, 6 dollars in summer, 8 in winter.

Sea-coal, 10 to 14 dollars, according to season.

Hyson tea,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  dollars.

Souchong, 1 do

Coffee, 28 cts.

Loaf sugar, 25 to 30, good brown sugar, 1 dollar, 6 lbs.

Candles, mould, 25 cts., dipped, 20 cts., both by the box.

WASHINGTON, March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1818.

MY DEAR H., — Yours of the 18th Feb. amused us much, in observing the sanguine hopes which you entertain, and in reading the various queries respecting houses, servants, and domestic concerns. I believe I must be methodical and answer them in course. The cooking is done here by wood, in most families; coal is only used by those who have been acquainted with it in other places and think it cheaper. Candles too are in general use, though I find ornamental lamps are common, which shows that oil may be had. I do not know the cost. . . .

I was much diverted with the report and your anticipation of my being appointed to the care of the President's house. There is no probability of such a thing. If any provision is made for such a purpose it will be to some inferior officer of the government, who can attend to this for small compensation, in addition to his other duties. But the proposal itself excites some sneers, as the idea of the necessity of a *high Chamberlain*, and our great man must be on his guard how he confers favours or emoluments on me. One severe piece has appeared already in the "*Aurora*" for my present appointment.

You remark upon there being a Theatre here, and think it is a matter of regret in so young a state of society, — but

you mistake, — the place is new, but the society, especially in winter, is such as has grown up in older capitals, and has been accustomed to all the refinements and elegancies, and I fear to the extravagance and dissipation, of established cities. I had written thus far when I was agreeably surprised by a visit from T. H. Perkins and John Sullivan Esq. After talking of home I accompanied them on a tour through the building to the marble columns and the statuary, objects which attract the notice of strangers. . . .

I presume that Mr. Phillips will be with you about the time of your receiving this, or perhaps a few days later. I took the liberty to ask his attention to a small box, containing specimens of our curious marble, which you will distribute to friends according to directions enclosed in the box. The box is small but heavy, and I fear it may have led to some expense to him besides the trouble of attending to it. I wish Thomas to inquire particularly and repay what he may have spent upon it.

The bankrupt law was debated about a week, and then rejected; the interior and landed interest is opposed to any exclusive advantages to commercial men, — indeed there is a strong dislike to the encouragement of commerce generally, and a great spirit is excited for building up manufactures in opposition to it. I think that the day after you receive this will be the March meeting. What a different course of feelings does the return of the day excite from those of last year's anniversary! They are not, however, without anxiety. The transplanting a family and forming entirely new connections are causes for thought and care.

I hope my good sisters and their husbands do not think my neglect of writing to them arises from want of affection, because it is exactly the reverse. I never turn my thoughts to that subject without feeling sensibly the loss we shall

sustain of their society, and that it is hard to break up old habits of intimacy. These circumstances are the most unpleasant that attend our removal, and their tendency is to bring on depression of spirits, which I must contend against, since it seems to be the decree of Providence that the separation must take place, and I will content myself with the hope that an intercourse will be kept up by occasional visits when we have a home to which we can invite such good friends. Yrs. ever.

MONDAY, March 16<sup>th</sup>, 1818.

MY DEAR H., — Your valuable letter of the 26th February was not received till three days after the regular period of the mail ; we must submit to the fates, in this as in other particulars, and not think ourselves exempted from feeling the inconveniences of changing seasons.

I am glad to find that you are sometimes prevailed upon to mix a little in society ; I know you enjoy a visit to Mrs. Borland's, and especially as Mrs. Lloyd can give such correct ideas of this place. The Rev. Mr. Hawley is the clergyman of St. John's church. I have had frequent interviews with him on the subject of enlarging the church, and feel quite acquainted ; his character seems to accord well with the account you have had of him. We have not yet been at Mr. Taylor's. I introduced George to him at the President's, or rather Mrs. Monroe's, drawing room last Wednesday evening, and he welcomed him as a young Columbian.

We were induced to go to the drawing room because we were informed it would be the last of the season : we met a good deal of splendour and gaiety, but I find it rather a dull business, although the close of the evening was enlivened by some songs sung by a circle of ladies with their



beaux, accompanying a piano. You know I am not very sentimental, but you will suppose I had some pleasant feelings when the last song was sung, "See from Ocean rising." I confess that it reminded me of home, although the scene around differed very materially from that of the humble parlour in Tremont St. I hope we shall soon have another home and renew our domestic occupations and enjoyments together. . . .

I find that the very warm weather, which we thought peculiar to this situation, about a fortnight since, extended over the whole country and has produced great damage by the sudden breaking up of the ice in the rivers. I am sorry to find that the bridge at Springfield has been carried away, because I wished you should pursue your journey on that route, both as it affords the greatest variety of country and avoids ferries. On this subject I shall give you a letter of particular instructions. . . .

*Tuesday morning.* Three letters are handed to me at breakfast. One from T. Clark, presenting a vote of the Town, expressing their thanks for my long and faithful services,—the cheap reward of republics, for which, however, I am grateful; another letter from Andover, not to ask for a plan, but only for an opinion respecting their new Academy; and a third from Stephen Codman Esq. requesting attention to some business in one of the public offices. Let Thomas tell him that I have received his letter and will attend to the subject of it.

I find from Susan's letter that the N. American review has taken some liberties with Mr. Wirt's P. Henry. We have just borrowed the book, but have not yet commenced reading it. I have looked into some of its pages, and think it may be liable to censure from you cool-blooded Yankees. Mr. W. is an ardent man, a great admirer of his hero, and

perhaps gives more importance to his character than is strictly due. The style too is florid, and characteristic of the author and our climate. We are reading *Corinne*; I read the translation aloud, while George follows with his eye the page of the original French: this book interests us much from its own merits, and from the frequent reflection that you have so lately gone through it. The original French is remarkably pure and easy, and would please our young students, Susan and Thomas.

I have been very much engaged the past week, and still continue so, in giving drawings and directions to a young man from Boston, Mr. Willard, who is making a model of our great building. He works in my room. I hope this will prove a satisfactory mode of conveying clear ideas of the several plans for finishing the centre, and enable the President of the Committees of Congress to select the one that on all considerations shall promise best.

I presume you must by this time have seen or heard from Mr. Fuller and Mr. Phillips, and know from them our particular situation; I hope too that the specimens of marble reached you safely. My friends must be content with such *solid* proofs of my remembrance. They have little value in any other light. . . . Yours ever.

A letter on March 22d is chiefly devoted to plans for the journey, and especially the important question whether Ma'am Pollard and her daughter should be brought with them. We learn later on that they were left behind. He promises a particular letter on the route to be taken, the houses to stop at, and the objects to be visited.

"At present I only say, it is my plan that you should take one of Fullam's coaches and proceed by way of Worcester and Springfield in three days to N. Haven, thence by the steamboat to New York." . . .

He also inquires his wife's plans about furniture, what she intends to bring with her, and what he will have to supply. On other matters he says :—

"I notice the extract which you send me from Mr. Andrews' letter to Mr. Joy. My expectations on that head are not very sanguine. Something may come of it, but not so soon as to interfere with your journey. Affairs of state move slowly, especially when involved with the expenditure of money. You think that you observe marks of contentment with my employ. Indeed I have met with nothing to displease. You know I am willing to be occupied, and the nature of the employment is congenial to my taste. My only drawback is from the apprehension either of the loss of the society of my children (and some dear friends) or that their course of business will be so broken up as to lead to unsettled and wavering habits. . . . I receive letters very frequently which I am obliged to answer. Some contain applications for employment, some wish encouragement and patronage for various projects."

Meantime the preparations for the great removal were going on in Boston through a number of weeks, as we can see by various bills of lading, charges for wharfage, etc. On March 24 three cases of books were shipped to Georgetown by the schooner Spruce; and later, by the schooner Columbia in April and the brig Golden Grove in May, the household furniture, including book-case and book-desk, chairs, desks, beds and bedding, with boxes of books and casts, was sent to its destination.

The "Colonial Express" train which left Boston this morning is due in Washington to-night, but a journey of five hundred miles was quite a different affair in the early years of the century, especially when there were children in the party. The family started on the 23d of

April, and reached Washington during the first week in May. From their record of expenses we know that the original plan was changed. There were at that date between thirty and forty stages advertised to run from Boston to various points, and as many as four different lines to New York. Their first stop was at Foxborough, where they had dinner; and the next, Providence, where they had supper and breakfast and passed the night.

Through a letter from Thomas, then a youth of twenty-two, we learn that the low spirits occasioned by their departure were not overcome until they had ridden many miles from Boston, when by degrees the glee of the children and the novelty of the scene had their effect upon the party. We hear of the waterfalls they saw on their road, and the rocky, precipitous summits, that reminded the little Greenleaf of the hill ascended by the travellers in Pilgrim's Progress, and recalled to Thomas in their barrenness and desolation Beattie's lines :—

"Tho' veins of gold in Chilian mountains glow,  
And bleak and barren Scotia's hills arise ;  
There Plague and Poison, War and Rapine grow, —  
Here peaceful are the vales and pure the skies,  
And Freedom warms the soul and sparkles in the eyes."

Their route lay through Norwich and Plainfield to New York, proceeding thence, after a halt, to Philadelphia and Baltimore, with a rest in each place. We do not know the date of their reaching Washington, nor where they stopped on first arriving, but we can imagine the joy of being united again.

Some of the prices, of board, etc., on the journey, were evidently much lower than prices nowadays, but the length of time consumed on the road made the progress of so large a party an expensive one, and the whole amount,

including Mr. Bulfinch's own travelling expenses with George and the removal of the furniture, is set down as \$589.30.

To defray this expense, the sum of three hundred dollars had been received from Colonel Lane in December, and the receipt of two hundred dollars additional is acknowledged in April.

Before the end of May we find the family going to housekeeping in a house on Capitol Hill, of which the plan is sketched in a letter written during the summer by Mrs. Bulfinch, which has fortunately been preserved, as it is the only one from her hand for a number of years.

The simple ground-plan of the house which was now their home shows a hall with front and back parlor, of which the larger is but thirteen by fourteen feet. An open passageway leads to the kitchen and woodhouse, and on the side is a garden thirty or forty feet wide, while the narrow yard in front is paved with brick and has a small flower border within the fence. A stable and garden ground for vegetables complete the *ensemble* of their new possessions.

FROM MRS. HANNAH BULFINCH TO MRS. E. COOLIDGE.

July 15, 1818.

DEAR SISTER, — As your brother undertook the pleasing task of answering your former letter, I think I have a right to claim the privilege of replying to this last. And here let me acknowledge for him and myself the great pleasure your animated description of the performances of the day (4th July) annually celebrated as a political festival, gave to us all. I should judge from your account as well as from the newspapers that the ceremony of laying the cornerstone of a building (the General Hospital) erecting for

purposes of humanity and benevolence must have awakened feelings, though of a patriotic nature, yet of a higher kind than is usually called forth by the roar of cannon and the ringing of the bells. The part performed by Marshall Prince was very honourable to him. Your representation was so well calculated to bring us *home* again that we must beg you to devote a portion of your valuable time to so charitable a purpose. For although we find ourselves established with most of our former conveniences about us, and some things added which for several years have been wanting—I mean such as good furniture and more help—yet when we sit down at the close of the day and reflect how far distant from us are those who are by nature so nearly connected, and by sentiment and affection so endeared to us and each other, I am ready to say in the language of the poet Burns : —

“ Ah, little did my mother think, when first she cradled me,  
What land I was to travel in, or what death I should dee ! ”

I would alter it, and say “ or what folks I should see ! ”

Yet, my dear sister, I mean my complaint should apply only to those I have been in some measure obliged to *leave*, rather than against those with whom I have become acquainted. They are many of them well educated, all of them friendly people. I am much pleased, among the rest, with a respectable minister of the Navy Yard and his lady ; their name is Hunter ; both of them sensible, elderly persons. Our own good man (Rev. Mr. McCormick) and his pretty daughter I have mentioned before. Judge Cranch and his very amiable wife have been a second time to visit us of a morning. We are now talking of a ride to Alexandria for next week if the weather should be less oppressive than during the past. How much I wish it were as easy

for yourself, Mr. C., and dear cousins, to visit us! We could present to you many scenes of interest and beauty. I would walk with you to a fine garden, owned by an industrious man, very near to our own ground. He has cultivated it admirably well, with all sorts of vegetables, which we may purchase when we please. He has a spot for flowers, where the double Hollyhock flourishes, and within a small enclosure we find a collection of valuable plants and many fine exotics.

We would introduce Elizabeth to as many as ten fine girls, who would almost vie with her in bloom. Three of them are daughters of a relation of Gen. Washington, their name Belmain; they are handsome and very sociable. I should expect to charm Uncle by the spacious streets, which will ensure to future generations ample room to move and breathe. He would see an active spirit of improvement; buildings of a useful sort going on in various places, even interrupting our stillness in some degree, as within our view there are four. I should find it more difficult to interest J. and T. We see few young men of the first rank as to education and manners, and those are busily engaged in their studies. . . .

I ought to notice your account of a church at S. Boston, and to add that it gave us pleasure to learn so desirable an object is completed for that place. Of Mr. Palfrey we hear favourably from all quarters, and congratulate the Society of Brattle St. upon the acquisition. . . .

As I frequently turn my thoughts to former places and objects, I am not a little curious to know who occupies our pew at church, that sacred spot where rest, Oh! dear to memory, mother and children. I would hope that no very untaught, unfeeling beings fill the venerated place. Who resides in our mansion in Tremont street? I connect with

that no strong emotion of regard, yet I wish it well. The small parlour was a cool one, and there was always room enough for real friends. Ma'am P., I am glad to find, is proceeding as well as we could expect. We hope she will not be to you a more frequent visitor than convenient, as you already have a sufficient number of her description. I hear Miss P. is called Elizabeth. I always thought Ma'am P.'s ambition would not easily stop in the great object of raising Eliza to something above what she has ever enjoyed herself. I had the satisfaction of doing for both more than I anticipated; and often, when working at employments which, if she had been in the way, would have been hers, I have consoled myself with thinking I was giving her, by the sacrifice, a means of livelihood, honest and respectable. Her mother has so handsome an interest on her money, which she means shall accumulate, that after leaving her many of our supplies, I made myself easy about them, and hope she will not intrude on your generosity by her accustomed manner of representing her affairs. I retain a grateful recollection of her past services, and Greenleaf is preparing a letter for her. I hope her health is better for more relaxation, and shall always be glad to hear of her welfare and of her children's.

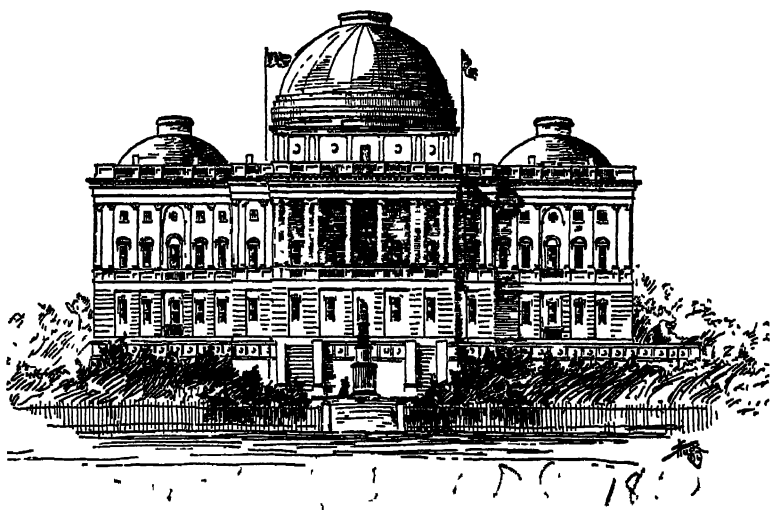
I beg you, my dear sister, to say to Madam (Coolidge) and your father C., that I frequently think of them and of their past kindness. My front chamber is exactly large enough to accommodate such respectable friends; it is the whole front of the house, and has three windows. Should they journey this way, how welcome would I make them to the use of it! Say the same to Mr. C. and your dear self; and let me look forward to a visit from each of our friends in turn. Now I have mentioned the large chamber, I will draw for your amusement our house, that is, its ground plan, on the other page.



For a description of our church and minister I refer you to one contained in the *N. American Review* for March, 1818, in a review of *Letters from the South*, page 377. It will give you a correct and but slightly heightened picture of our place of worship. It may possibly serve to amuse my dear young friends, to whom we all beg our affectionate remembrances. Notwithstanding my very moderate encouragement to J. and T. respecting objects calculated to please them, I do think we have some, independent of the Capitol, which with all its faults is a wonderful work of art. Farewell, my dear sister. I am loth to say farewell, even in a letter. With love to little Sue from Aunt at Washington, I am your and her sincere friend, sister and aunt,

H. B.





## CHAPTER IX

### ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL

1818-1830

Still in thy right hand carry gentle peace,  
To silence envious tongues ; be just, and fear not ;  
Let all the ends thou aim'st at be thy country's,  
Thy God's, and truth's.

SHAKESPEARE.

WITH the opening of the summer Mr. Bulfinch may be considered to have fully entered upon his new life, and the great work which had called him to the capital, the magnificent building of which General Washington himself had laid the original corner-stone.

That was on September 18, 1793, when the north wing was begun, and the subsequent history of the Capitol, so far as it has been made known, is an interesting chapter of our national records. The first volume of the "International Review" (New York, 1874) contains an historical paper

of value, by James Q. Howard, M. A., on the "Architects of the American Capitol," of which building he writes: "It seems proper that we should place in more enduring form the history of a structure which, in adaptation to the uses and purposes for which it was built, and in architectural beauty, grace, and grandeur, is not surpassed by any government building in the Old World or the New."

Here we find described the earliest crude ideas of the building,—the first sketch by Thornton; the controversies and disappointments of poor Hallet, the first architect, who "had hoped to bind his name with the rising glory of America;" the slow progress of the work under Hoban & Hadfield, delayed by faithless stone-masons and continual disputes; Latrobe taking charge in 1803, and having to rebuild almost all that had been done before; the limited resources of the government in contrast with the grandeur of its ideas; the brick, burnt on the spot from the abundance of clay; the use of freestone, from the Acquia Creek quarries, in the place of a superior stone which it would cost more to deliver; then later the beautiful Potomac marbles, and the genius of Latrobe, showing itself in designs for columns adapted from American products, the tobacco plant and Indian corn; at last, after eight years of toil, the failure of appropriations with the coming on of war in 1812, the British entering Washington in 1814 and burning the just completed wings, making the Supreme Court room the especial object of their hatred, chairs, desks, and other combustible materials being piled up there together, in order to destroy every vestige of the hall associated with the Chief Justice, John Marshall.

It did, indeed, seem as if, in Mr. Willard's words, the fates had determined that there should never be a completed Capitol at Washington.

Mr. Latrobe, recalled at the return of peace, began the work of restoration, and the north and south wings were again nearly finished at the time of his resignation. Mr. Bulfinch has described the impression the buildings made upon him when he first saw them,—the disconnected wings, the ravages of fire still apparent. It was now his task to enter into the labors of others and carry them forward to successful accomplishment.

Perhaps the peculiar difficulties of this stage of the undertaking could have been met by no one better than by himself, for they required in addition to artistic qualifications those traits which were his by inheritance, and by the discipline of his past life, moderation, and firmness of temper, and that power of dealing with men without exciting rivalry which is only possible to one whose own ambitions are subordinated to the general order.

The work of completing the wings was first taken up, and then that of building the central portion, the area which it now occupies being then covered by “a mass of earth, rubbish, and old foundation. The old foundations of the basement story were broadened, and the ground floor strengthened with arches. The general plans of his predecessors were followed, except in the western projection of the centre, which was constructed after a plan of his own. Latrobe designed the Rotunda, but its execution was the work of Bulfinch, after drawings by himself. . . .

“The artistic taste of Mr. Bulfinch was conspicuously shown in his arrangement to remedy a mistake in the location of the building, it having been placed too far west, so as to overhang the brow of Capitol Hill, instead of resting upon its level summit. The western front thus exhibiting a story lower than the eastern, he covered this exposed basement with the beautiful semicircular glacis and sloping

terraces which render the western approach grand and striking in the highest degree."

The Capitol was completed, with the exception of a few details easily executed from his plans, when Mr. Bulfinch returned to New England in 1830. For twenty years it remained as he left it, until, in 1851, the eminent architect, Mr. Walter, was appointed to build the new wings. The changes arising from this extension, together with the grand dome, of Mr. Walter's design, which crowns the Capitol to-day, have resulted in a transformation of the building which my grandfather himself would doubtless be the first to applaud.

Except for the above alterations, his work remains substantially as it was, and in fact it is still, what Mr. Willard has called it, the nucleus and centre of the whole. His letters suggest that some changes in the designs of Mr. Latrobe were made by him besides those recorded, but what they all were it must be impossible ever fully to know. His own dome was higher than Mr. Latrobe's plan, and it is noteworthy that the criticism made upon it at the time was, not that it was too low, but that it was too high.

It is in the western portico, belonging to that portion which is said by all who are acquainted with the subject to have been more his own design than any other part of the main building, that we find naturally the most resemblance to Charles Bulfinch's early work in New England.

The first letter we give is the following one to his brother-in-law. It is dated in pencil January, 1819, but the allusions to the Constitutional Convention of 1820 show that it belongs somewhat later : —

TO J. COOLIDGE.

MY GOOD FRIEND, — I find by the Boston papers that your duties as a member of the Convention are at an end ; the session must have been interesting, from the mass of talent that composed the assembly, but I think that they even exceeded our great men here in their abundant discussions. We have not yet received an arranged account of the amendments adopted ; hope to see them in the Weekly Messenger in a few days. My young men, as well as myself, regret that the Convention thought it advisable to change the election season, and alter the old established usage ; it is so interwoven in the mind of a native Bostonian with many of the civil, religious and military institutions of our fathers that we cannot help fearing that its effect may be injurious.

Congress has done but little up to this time. It seems, however, determined now to make great efforts at retrenchment, to curtail all the establishments, as much as they will possibly bear. A bill for reducing the army has been under discussion a fortnight and will soon pass the House, but it is very doubtful how far the Senate will concur in it. Committees are raised to investigate the civil establishments, to consider if any offices are superfluous or too highly paid, and will aim at simplifying the mode of conducting business — but I hardly think they will have time to sift thoroughly the present system and to digest and adopt a new one in the space of 6 weeks, all that remains of the present session. In fact, it is curious for one brought up in old Federal principles to observe the jealousy, almost approaching to hostility, with which every measure of administration is viewed and commented upon, even now when the majority are fast friends with the executive, and no

special cause for excitement exists, except the temporary want of money. I can look back and easily conceive how irksome must have been the situation of a member of Congress a few years since, when party animosities prevailed to such a degree that they did not mix in the same company and could not take lodgings in the same house. Jealousy of rulers is probably inseparable from republican governments, but it is hard that when men, like our heads of departments, have been raised by their talents to high stations, they should appear as the objects for the carping and caviling of far inferior men. . . .

I had proceeded thus far when I took a stroll into the Congress library, and had been there but a few minutes before I was accosted by a gentleman, whom I immediately recollected as Mr. Cogswell. An agreeable half hour soon passed in inquiries and information respecting your son and Mr. C.'s travels, and ended in inviting him to pass the Sunday evening *en famille*, which he agreed to, and we were gratified at seeing him and Col. Eustis, with Mr. Hall, Mr. Bailey and Mr. Simpkins, a member from South Carolina. . . . Col. Eustis leaves us in a few days, and has offered to convey a parcel to you. I shall make up one for him. I send a calender of the present year. It contains a variety of information that may be amusing to you ; among other articles you will find in the almanack, at the end, a statement of the thermometer for each day of the past year, by which you will be able to judge of this climate. The frontispiece gives a faint outline of the back view of the Capitol. The newspaper contains a report respecting the Representatives' Hall. Some members complain that they can neither hear nor be heard. This, in most instances, arises from their own defects of voice or hearing, for no room of its vast size and height would accommodate them

better. Its longest diameter is 95 feet, and its height 60. The committee called on me, and I was obliged to appear ready with my advice, and to act as they should direct, but you will discern that the report discourages the alteration, and this will be the decision.

I know that you get the papers at the Insurance office, but thought it might amuse Betsey and Anna S. to look over what we were doing, and peruse a paper immediately from us. Another part of the packet is an envelope to Mr. Hale ; he sends me his weekly paper, and I supply him with such documents as are not usually inserted in the papers. I will thank you to deliver them to him.

My good wife desires love to yours, and wishes me to say that she has of late addressed her letters more frequently to sister Storer than to her, because she thought they would serve to enliven her retirement, and we feel as if our letters to any one will be communicated to all our *family* friends.

I have lately written to P. O. Thacher, chiefly on the subject of a church commencing here on liberal principles, for which I must refer you to him. We look for assistance from your quarter, and shall soon make our appeal to Boston generosity, and have no fear that it will be in vain.

I find that you are Chairman of the Hospital committee ; do inform me how you get on ; how does the building appear, and what improvement does it make to the neighborhood ?

Wednesday, Jan. 24. . . . Last evening the Committee of the new church met, and requested me to write to Boston for advice on the best mode of obtaining assistance. I shall address a letter in a day or two to Rev. F. Parkman on the subject. He knows our circumstances better than any other of your Clergy. I wish you to give him your opinion, after he has received my letter. With love to Sister and family, I am yrs,

C. BULFINCH.



My grandfather here mentions a subject which seems to have been one of his first interests in Washington, aside from his professional duties, — the establishment of a Unitarian church. Coming directly from Dr. Freeman's ministrations at King's Chapel, he would naturally be earnest to coöperate with those who had such a purpose at heart, and from this time the affairs of the church and its ministry are topics that constantly occur in the family letters. Dr. Channing's famous sermon preached in Baltimore a few months later, in May of the same year, at the ordination of Jared Sparks, no doubt served to arouse the interest of the people still more. The church building was erected on the corner of Sixth and D streets, from plans furnished by Mr. Bulfinch, and was in the general style of his New England churches. Its first minister, Mr. Little, was a valued friend of the family, and after his death the officiating clergymen, often students just graduated from the Harvard Divinity School, were sure to find a cordial welcome under their roof.

An anecdote of this period has reached me, from a source outside the family, that shows my grandfather's patience and serenity of temper. Before the church of his own faith was built, he was a regular attendant, with his household, upon the preaching of a clergyman who harbored no liking for the new movement, and who took pains on one especial Sunday to make Unitarians the object of his open attack. Those were times when bigotry and rancor were unhappily often found in the pulpit, and were regarded as proofs of zeal in the cause of truth and piety. The Bulfinches occupied a front pew, where they sat through the whole service, covertly watched by their neighbors, who never doubted that it was the last time they would ever darken the doors of that sanctuary, Mr. Bulfinch's opinions

being so well understood as to make the matter a personal one. To the surprise of all, however, the next Sunday found the family again in their places, and no notice was ever taken of the bitter words launched against them.

The house which they first occupied was exchanged three years later for another, whose site is nowhere mentioned, but in 1823 they removed to Sixth Street, where they continued to live while in Washington. It was a modest brick house, one of two or more that were built in a block. In 1828 the daughter Susan writes that "an Episcopal church is to be placed on the lot in the rear of our house, while a Methodist meeting-house is to be built just above us."

They were not wholly among strangers on their arrival in the city, for Mrs. Bulfinch was related through her Greenleaf connections to the families of Eliot and Cranch, and a delightful intimacy with these and other friends in their circle soon grew up. Mr. Bulfinch's position as architect of the Capitol, and his personal acquaintance with the President and officers of the government, brought him and his wife into agreeable social relations with them. An old card of invitation is found among his papers from the President and Mrs. Monroe requesting the favor of their company at dinner "on Friday next at five o'clock."

With Mr. Adams he was on terms of friendship, cemented by their sympathy on religious subjects, and among his other friends in the new liberal movement, besides Judge Cranch and Mr. Eliot, were Messrs. Gales and Seaton, editors of the "National Intelligencer."

The family had hoped and anticipated that their home, though unpretending, might become the stopping-place of their New England acquaintance who journeyed southward. The hope was fully realized, and this opportunity of showing hospitality to old friends and new added a great charm

to their Washington life, which evidently was in the main a very happy one until the last few months of their stay, when it was clouded by the shadow of death. Several journeys are recorded in these years. One was an autumn visit to the North in 1828, and the following year they made an excursion to Richmond.

Three years after they came to Washington their daughter Susan was married to Mr. David A. Hall, in whom a congenial and devoted friend was added to their circle. In 1825 the sons Thomas and George—two brothers closely united in feeling, and in person strongly resembling each other—returned together to Boston, to enter upon a business life among familiar scenes.

Between Apthorp and Greenleaf a similar intimacy existed. They both pursued their studies at the Columbian College, and the younger of the two, graduating in 1827, left home in the same year for the Harvard Divinity School. Apthorp followed family traditions and chose the medical profession, joining his brothers in New England the next year; and as Francis too, was away, engaged in business in New York, the home circle grew small indeed. Charles, the eldest son, remained with his parents; and the Halls seem to have lived with them a part of the time, and later to have had a home of their own.

The family correspondence now increases, and the mother especially writes often and tenderly to her absent boys. From these many letters a few passages can be selected which illustrate the home life and course of events in Washington, and here and there touch upon the father's employment at the Capitol; but they are very largely devoted to the affairs of the children themselves, in whose every movement and change of place or fortune the parents felt the deepest possible interest.

The letters we have are chiefly those to Greenleaf and his brother Thomas, but it would be unjust to infer that the other sons, George and Francis and the "good Charles," did not have an equal share of their solicitude, and there was always a peculiar depth of tenderness for the shy and silent Apthorp. Thomas, although not the eldest son, had early showed such a readiness to share his parents' anxieties and cares for the rest as to give him a leading place in the family counsels. In a birthday letter when he was twenty-one years old his mother had written: "I congratulate myself, my beloved son, that no disgrace is attached to your entrance upon the theatre of life. Your birth took place when heavy misfortune oppressed the hearts of your parents, nor did we look upon even *your* existence with cheerfulness, yet it has been to us a blessing. . . . I bless Providence who gave you to us, and pray that your course may be bright in every talent and virtue, enlivening your path through this world, and your passage to a better." Through his father's second loss of fortune he had taken up a business life on leaving college, but it was irksome to his taste, and a string of verses is still preserved, written in 1820, where, with the family facility for rhyme, his lively genius depicts his thralldom: —

With the morning's earliest ray  
Begins the Lumber merchant's day.  
Lumber, Nails, and Glass and Lime  
Demand his care, demand his time,  
And drive him from his bed of down  
To scour the streets and range the town,  
Alert for purchases and sales  
Of Lime and Lumber, Glass and Nails.  
But if, by chance, protracted slumber  
Keep him from Lime, Glass, Nails and Lumber,  
In dreams Lime, Lumber, Nails and Glass  
Before his troubled senses pass,

And visions dire of suits and Jails  
 Recal to Lumber, Lime and Nails.  
 What tho' Lime, Glass, Nails and Lumber  
 All his leisure hours encumber,  
 Lumber, Lime and Nails and Glass  
 Make the long days swiftly pass.  
 Heavy are Lumber, Nails and Lime,  
 But heavier far is idle time.  
 I own that Lumber, Lime and Nails  
 Seem less fit for maids than males,  
 And dandy bucks don't care a dime  
 For tons of Lumber, Nails and Lime ;  
 Yet dear to bucks and dear to lasses  
 Their looking and their drinking glasses,  
 Tho' ours contain no gen'rous wines,  
 Nor clad in burnish'd silver shines,  
 Yet lad and lass shall join our chime,  
 With Glass sing Lumber, Nails and Lime,  
 Interpreting, if such their whim,  
 "Mirror" for her and "Cup" for him.  
 While sage Experience bids me number  
 All your virtues, Lime and Lumber !  
 Thus the sage, with locks of grey,  
 Concludes his eulogistic lay : —  
 "Would you the glitt'ring ore amass ?  
 Stick to Lumber, Nails and Glass ;  
 Or to civic honours climb ?  
 Mount on Lumber, Nails and Lime.  
 When perplexities encumber  
 Have recourse to Lime and Lumber ;  
 When fav'ring breezes fill the sails  
 Ballast the bark with Lime and Nails,  
 And sing the praise, in varied rhyme,  
 Of Lumber, Nails and Glass and Lime !"

Returning again to Mr. Bulfinch's employment under government, we find that a few years after undertaking the work on the Capitol an episode occurred which is told in the following correspondence : —

FROM J. ELGAR.

OFFICE OF COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC BUILDINGS,  
WASHINGTON, Sept. 30, 1822.

SIR, — I have a painful duty to perform. It is that of announcing a general reduction of Salaries, to take place at the end of the present year. Subsequently to that period yours will be \$2,000 per annum.

Very respectfully,

Your most obt. svt.

J. ELGAR, Com. P. B.

TO JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

January 25, 1823.

SIR, — I must beg you to excuse me for again soliciting attention to a subject which interests me very nearly, the proposed reduction of my salary. I have lately applied to the Attorney General, who informs me that the subject has not been mentioned to him by the President; and that if it should be, he is so overwhelmed in business, that he will not be able to pay attention to it, but in course, after other affairs already committed to him.

I would respectfully suggest that, having received notice of the honour of my appointment immediately from your hand, I have been happy in considering myself more directly connected with the department of State and under your protection. The offer of a salary of \$2,500 was my inducement for quitting a place where I was well established, and a numerous and respectable acquaintance, for a residence with strangers, and an employment of great responsibility. I have heard no complaint against my personal or professional conduct; and have reason to believe that they have been satisfactory to the various Committees of Con-

gress with whom I have been connected, and to the members generally. My stile of living is prudent and economical; but as the sum I have received is not more than sufficient for the wants of a large family, the necessity of retrenchment will be irksome and humiliating; nor can I think it required from the circumstances of the times, or proper at the close of so great a work as the Capitol of the United States, which will probably be completed in two or three years more.

It is due to myself to remark, that my salary has never equalled that given by the States of Virginia, North and South Carolina, to their civil engineers; and that Col. Baldwin, the superintendant of the canal to unite the Susquehannah and Schuylkil, receives \$4,000 per annum. The amount paid me is the same which Mr. Latrobe received, and he was allowed, at the same time, to conduct two large and profitable works at Baltimore, while my whole time is devoted to my duties here, without any other source of additional income.

Under these circumstances, I most respectfully request your influence, that the Commissioner may be directed to continue my salary at its original amount, either on the plea of an implied contract, in my understanding of the subject, or in any other manner which you shall think best.

I have the honour to be,

with great respect,

yr. obed. Ser<sup>t</sup>.

PRESIDENT MONROE TO ATTORNEY-GENERAL WIRT.

January 31, 1823.

DEAR SIR, — I send you a paper, the claim of Mr. Bulfinch, which will not require five minutes' attention. The question involved in it is whether the invitation to him

to come here at a given salary formed a contract not to be altered, supposing his conduct to be correct, until the Capitol should be finished?

I wish an immediate answer, as I promised one on my part this morning.

J. M.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL WIRT TO PRESIDENT MONROE.

Jan<sup>y</sup>. 31<sup>st</sup>, 1823.

SIR,—I am of opinion that Mr. Adams' letter of 4th December, 1817, and Mr. Bulfinch's answer thereto, make a contract between the government and that individual, which is unalterable by the mere will of either party, as if it had been, instead of a salary, a contract for a fixed sum to be paid for the whole work. I have the honour to remain, Sir, very respectfully,

Your obed. serv.

W<sup>m</sup> WIRT.

My grandfather writes, two years later, —

WASHINGTON, June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1825.

DEAR THOS.,—Your attention to keep us informed of your own movements, and of amusing topics of a public nature, deserves our thanks, and ought to meet with suitable return from us; but you know that this is our season of languor and inactivity. The heat deprives us of all power of exertion, except what is required to perform our daily duties; a succession of 18 or 20 days of heat from 86° to 93° leaves us no cause to regret that we did not undertake the journey we once thought of; for under such circumstances I do not know how your mother or myself could have borne the fatigue. You expect us to give you the news of this place; we have but little to communicate;



a *Launch* which I did not attend, but which is well spoken of, and a *military muster* for to-morrow, which our young men are complaining of, are our principal public events. Your friend J. C. has not yet appeared with his bride, but we are expecting them hourly, and perhaps we shall have the pleasure of seeing them before I close this.

Our papers give us extracts of accounts of the Bunker hill celebration, but we have not yet seen any complete, detailed account; from what we can judge, you Bostonians, lovers of parade, must have had enough to content you on this occasion, and not only so, but full scope must have been afforded for the most honourable feelings and sentiments, and while these have their proper influence, we will excuse a little puffing. I have been disposed myself to shoulder my crutch in relating the events of the day, which are perfectly fresh in memory as they took place when I was a school-boy. I perceive by the papers that the committee has not approved of any one of the designs offered for the monument, and that they have agreed to get up something of the Obelisk kind. I felt as much of an impulse as the heat of the weather would allow to attempt a design myself, but upon reflection have abandoned the idea. An obelisk may be executed much cheaper than a column, but to meet the high raised expectations of the publick it must be very large and lofty; and is singly, of itself, a very uninteresting figure; built only of plain courses of stone it will require to be accompanied by Collonades or groups of sculpture to make it an honourable specimen of the arts; and from the estimates that I have been able to make, I cannot conceive that the funds are equal to one half of the necessary expense. I see, however, by the inscription on the plate, that Mr. Paris is stated to be architect;<sup>1</sup> by which

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Solomon Willard's plans were finally selected.

I judge that some general outlines of a design have been adopted. I shall look to you to furnish me with a description when attainable and a copy of Mr. Webster's address. . . .

Our work at the Capitol proceeds but slowly, owing to delay of contractors in delivering the large blocks for columns. We have received only 4 this season, which are raised into their places, and must have 7 more before the much talked of Pediment can be commenced. With respect to the ornament proposed to decorate this, the artists in general feel much disappointed; about 30 persons presented 36 designs, some well and others badly executed, but none answering the President's idea of a suitable decoration for a legislative building. He disclaimed all wish to exhibit triumphal cars and emblems of Victory, and all allusions to heathen mythology, and thought that the duties of the Nation or its Legislators should be expressed in an obvious and intelligible manner. After several attempts, the following has been agreed upon: a figure of America occupies the centre, her right arm resting on the shield, supported by an altar or pedestal bearing the inscription *July 4, 1776*, her left hand pointing to the figure of *Justice*, who, with *unveiled* face, is viewing the scales, and the right hand presenting an open scroll inscribed *Constitution, March 4, 1789*; on the left of the principal figure is the eagle, and a figure of *Hope* resting on her anchor, with face and right hand uplifted, — the whole intended to convey that while we cultivate *Justice* we may *hope* for success. The figures are bold, of 9 feet in height, and gracefully drawn by Mr. Persico, an Italian artist. It is intended that an appropriate inscription shall explain the meaning and moral to dull comprehensions. I have given you the above, which you may speak of, but I wish it not to be put in print, as the subordinate parts are still subject to alterations.

While I am engaged with models of ideal personages in stone, you are becoming acquainted with a circle of real beauties, [so] that we should fear for your heart only that we know the force of contrary attractions will counteract each other, and ensure your safety. We hope for a letter to give us the domestic detail, as I may call it, of the 17th, in which I presume you bore a part with Cousins from the east and west. . . .

I have kept open this until Saturday evening, and see nothing of J. C. We cannot now expect him before Tuesday in the regular course of stages.

Yrs. affectionately.

In a letter written two days earlier to Thomas, his mother makes these references : —

We go on much as usual. Papa rides every day, almost, up the hill, and has nearly settled a design for the Pediment. . . . I must not describe it till it is more complete. I wish your father would furnish a plan for the Obelisk, and feel convinced he could please the committee, if he were to try his hand.

The next winter she writes to the sons : —

Dec. 25, 1825.

The papers will show you we have had an alarm of fire at the Capitol, and considerable disorder introduced into the elegant Library, but 'tis treated as not of much consequence, and no doubt will soon be repaired, though the carpet, I am told, which cost 1,000 dollars, is almost ruined. Your good father has felt concerned and anxious, as he is very reasonably proud of that room. This seems to be a sad time for fires everywhere.

*Hannah Apthorp Bulfinch (Mrs. Charles Bulfinch)*







FROM MRS. BULFINCH.

October 19<sup>th</sup>, 1826.

DEAR THOMAS, — This day our citizens are celebrating the funeral honours to the memory of the departed Presidents. Your father and brothers have gone to the Capitol to listen to Mr. Wirt's Eulogy, while Susan and I, upon the invalid list, are seated in our little back chamber, the window of which commands a good view of the hill. A long line of procession has just moved up the broad avenue north of the Capitol; the flash of the cannon we plainly see, a minute before its heavy sound meets the ear. Before I close my letter you shall be informed how the oration goes off. . . .

What follows is in her husband's hand: —

I, of course, continue the subject. Much has been expected from the performance of Mr. Wirt, though all were aware of the difficulties he had to encounter. Being a member of the Cabinet would make an exalted eulogium of Mr. Adams appear like servile adulation of the present head of the government, and it was well known that his predilections, both personal and political, were in favour of Mr. Jefferson. Mr. Wirt has gratified and delighted a most crowded audience for the space of  $2\frac{1}{4}$  hours, in an unceasing flow of language, eloquent and not verbose, delivered without once referring to notes, in his easy and gentlemanly manner. He alluded to the early history of Massachusetts and its constant struggles to maintain its rights, as having had a great influence in forming the bold and energetic character of Adams, and did ample justice to the characters of the patriots of the North; while the more



settled submission to English rule in Virginia gave Mr. Jefferson in early life the opportunity to cultivate his taste for general science. He continued a discriminating view of these two great men in all the relations of their long and active lives; often rising to passages of great force and beauty. I do not pretend to follow him even in a sketch. The performance will undoubtedly be printed, when I will send you a copy. I must, however, mention the most delightful description which he gave of the retired life of Jefferson, of his residence at Monticello, and of the charms of his manners and society. In fine, I was afraid that so many discourses on this subject had been delivered that not much more could be expected than an hackneyed repetition, but Mr. W. has happily executed his performance and thrown round it an air of originality.

[Continued by Susan.]

DEAR BROTHER, — A visitor unexpectedly calling obliged Papa to lay down the pen. . . . We are all much in our old state when commencing cool weather; sometimes a fire in the chimney, puss on the rug; sometimes open windows and flowers blooming. The other day we had a visit from an old college acquaintance of yours, Mr. Francis, the Reverend, of Watertown. He preached here and gave great satisfaction. He spoke with regard of you, and expressed a wish to renew his acquaintance. His wife was with him, a lovely woman of sweet manners. You ought to call and see them. Mamma wished me to mention them to you.

As we have said before, the family enjoyed the visits of a number of New England friends while at the capital, and among these were their good friends the Higginsons, of Cambridge. The winter of 1826-27 was marked by an

event of unusual interest to the young people. A lovely visitor came to them from Hallowell, in Maine, their cousin Harriet Vaughan, a girl of rare attractions, whose four months' stay made a deep impression, not only on the susceptible hearts of her young men relatives, but on the whole family circle. This cousin, their pride and delight through the rest of her life, too early cut short, and whose name was cherished for long years, married after her return to the North our well-known writer Jacob Abbott, and became the mother of several sons of distinction, among them Dr. Lyman Abbott, of Brooklyn, N. Y.

In the spring, when the youngest son leaves for Cambridge at the same time that Harriet goes home, we find his father supplying him with directions for his journey, and the selections which follow from the numerous home letters reflect the varied and busy family life, and mention a few of the friends around them :—

FROM MRS. BULFINCH TO S. G. BULFINCH.

WASHINGTON, April 17, 1827.

DEAR GREENLEAF,—Thinks I to myself, Stephen will by this time begin to wish for a letter from home, when, having seen all that the country afforded, and the great cities also, and gone through meeting with brothers and friends, he will say or think, "I wish I could know how my old companions are in 6th St." Well then, my dear boy, I am happy to say we are well, rejoicing in the good weather you have had for your journey, and the favorable accounts your letters convey to us. You have been very good to inform us from Philadelphia and from New York of your proceedings. We now shall wait with some impatience for an account of your reception by your Boston friends and afterwards by your Cambridge ones. All,

every word, will be more dearly valued than I can describe. Do, then, write soon, and particularly about yourself. We have seen but little of your friend Edward since you went, and suppose he does not love to come where he would miss your sweet Coz. and self. He has, however, seen your letter. Apthorp carried it to him. You are probably by this time initiated in the rules of your new College, have been introduced to your father's friend, the excellent and amiable Mr. Higginson. I am sure you will like him. Tell us all your feelings and impressions. The beauties of Cambridge must be new to you. I almost envy you your pleasure when one fine object after another meets your eyes. You must not expect such pleasure to be lasting. The novelty will be over, and then comes sober application to study, but as you love employment and literary competition, you will still have much to interest you. On Sunday morning I found myself very lonesome, missing my usual occupation. I saw more of you on that good day than any other. But I dashed away a childish, or rather, motherly tear, and thought of your happy prospects. I have no news for you but the old story that we all love you very much, and talk of you very much. Thomas and George are, no doubt, glad to see you. So are your Aunts and Uncles. I commit you, my beloved child, to the care of your Heavenly Father and to the friendly assistance of those relatives, and am as ever

Yr. truly affectionate Mother.

FROM MRS. BULFINCH TO S. G. BULFINCH.

June 14, 1827.

DEAR GREENLEAF, — We were gratified yesterday when old Robert returned from the post office with your nice, long letter of the 7th in his hand, and to-day bringing

dear Thomas's of the 8th. I believe it really pleases the faithful creature to be the instrument of procuring us so much satisfaction. Yours bespeaks your content and comfort, except a few natural longings and yearnings towards home, and those, even we would not desire you to be freed from entirely. . . .

And so you joined the gay throng on Election day. This always brings me back to old times, when I was young, and lived in the very midst of those celebrations of the sovereign people, the merry, noisy rabble, who began the day with lively hilarity, and ended it in stupid intemperance and quarrels. . . .

You ought to see how nicely our City Hall ground looks now, enclosed with a fence, young trees planted round, and within sowed with oats and grass, beginning to look green and smooth. I never saw any such space in the city so suddenly altered and improved.

At this moment, a noise assails my ear. Our neighbor Mauro's black boy is beating the frying pan to collect a swarm of bees. Sad music he makes, but I am almost at the end of my letter, or I should scold at the discordant sound. Apthorp has just come in, and refreshed himself with some cherries. *Apropos*, Mr. Hall saw at market the other morning, cherries, strawberries, gooseberries and currants, raspberries, mulberries, whortleberries. Small pears and ripe apples from Carolina were seen to-day. This is a most productive season.

FROM JOHN APTHORP BULFINCH.

June 21, 1827

DEAR G., — I am seated at the new window in Sister's chamber, enjoying a refreshing breeze which has sprung up after a pretty warm day. The view, though I suppose not

so rich and varied as the one you may be at this moment surveying from your window at the east, is, I will venture to say, not less extensive. Looking over Mrs. Cook's house, the mention of which may recall to you many a gingerbread association, I have a glimpse of the river and the opposite banks at that point, very distant. Further west appears the Mansion House, and the high hills are seen, extending along the other side of the river.

Our street looks very handsomely, now that the trees are in their richest dress.

Last Tuesday evening Miss Barbour had a party, to which she honoured the Messrs. Bulfinch with an invitation. Charles and I went accordingly. We found a good collection of young ladies — the Miss Seatons, Miss Blake, and many others whom I had never seen before. There was rather a deficiency of beaux. Your chum William Poor I met. He has grown very tall, and is a handsome young man, and very pleasant. He joined the company of Washington Guards, in their late visit to Baltimore, and it is said was the admiration of the whole corps. I am going this evening with Lindsly to see the Eliots. By the by — Dawes has gone to Baltimore lately. He went on a fine little horse of his own, which he purchased a short time ago. He rides every morning from sunrise till breakfast time. I do not think, dear G——, that you *need* ever feel homesick, for you are always at home in our thoughts.

July 4, 1827, his mother writes to Greenleaf to give away his light coat, if he does not need it, to some lad who may want it more than he does. "Farewell, dear G——; just received a nice letter from H. V. She is a dear girl, and there is more than one here that thinks so."

FROM SUSAN TO GREENLEAF.

July 6, 1827.

. . . That venerable person Uncle Robert has been, and returned empty-handed from the Post Office. I should think he could go in his sleep, so regular and constant is his march, at 12, each day. . . . We have had some warm times here. The weather was warm by day and by night. The people were warm about the 4th of July. Papa is warm when he walks, or rather *sails*, up and down the passage, with his calico gown unfurled, endeavouring to catch the slightest breeze, and at last settling in meek despair in the porch. Mamma is quite warm all the time, but chiefly at tea-time.

TO GREENLEAF FROM HIS MOTHER.

Sept. 29.

Dr. Lowell has been here two Sundays, and won the hearts of our people by his piety and sweetness of manners.

Dec. 6th.

Mr. Sprague brought us pleasant letters from your Aunt V. and Harriet. They are in health, that is, Aunt much better, and H. quite well. Your kind Uncle sent us two barrels of nice apples, and H. V. several pretty little tokens of regard, such as card racks for visiting cards to place over the mantel piece, made most ingeniously of paste board, covered with beautiful shells; and a nice cap, worked by her own self. These were for Sister; to me, she sent two pretty drawings of flowers and butterflies. I wish, dear S., you were sometimes here, to sit round the fire and eat your apples with your brothers of an evening, and chat away the hour before retiring to rest. The time may come when we shall be reunited. At any rate I think you will enjoy seeing Apthorp next Spring.

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MRS. BULFINCH TO S. G. BULFINCH.

Dec. 16, 1827.

. . . I cannot help paying a passing tribute of respect and esteem to Mr. Motte in this part of my letter. I have just returned from church, where we have heard him deliver an excellent discourse upon the inefficacy of prayer without a proper course of life. He has gained upon our regards every time we have heard him, and we, with all our people, relinquish him with genuine regret. We have witnessed to-day the first baptismal ceremony ever performed in our church. Mrs. Poor, with her two children and her daughter, Mrs. Webb, with two infants, came forward to the table, and a short ceremony and a prayer followed. I was much pleased, as I reverence the old custom, and think it highly useful to all the mothers and children present, besides those immediately concerned.

. . . When you see your dear Aunt Storer, let her see this letter. Susan received her kind one about a week since. Thanks for its contents. They show her in better health than usual. I would write to her by this opportunity, but short days and various engagements seem to take up all my time. Your Aunt will recollect the daughters of Mrs. Van der Neuville, Mrs. Hamilton and her sister Mrs. Ingersol. Mr. I. is member of Congress from the State of Connecticut. The ladies and their husbands are here, and I feel a wish to be friendly with them. Calls have passed and invitations for tea and evening sent and accepted. Mr. and Mrs. H. came, but her sister was prevented by the illness of one of her children. She has four with her. We invited a few of the members, and had a pleasant evening. We admire Mrs. H., indeed it is no difficult matter to love her, she is so amiable and agreeable. We talked over family affairs, and the sympathy for your Uncle Apthorp's

misfortunes gave a topic which engaged us very much. We all feel affected by your Uncle's late letter, wherein he says Leonard was quite calm in his last hours, said it was "all right, and he willing to go." Is not this a circumstance of real comfort? To be willing to go is saying much. Our affections must be weaned from this strange, fluctuating world, and ready to enter with hope into a better. All I desire is that when my time arrives, it may find me in this happy state of mind, "willing to go."

Jan. 14<sup>th</sup>, 1828.

. . . How have you passed your fortnight's vacation? I wish you could have spent it with us. We have had one gratification of late in hearing Mr. Secretary Southard's oration before the Columbian Institute, which would have been quite to your taste. Your sister and myself rode up to the hill early enough to call on Mrs. Cranch. I then went with her to make a call on Mrs. Eliot of the hill, a lady whom our old friend the mathematician married about five months since. She seems to be an agreeable woman, and well qualified to make a pleasant home to him and his sons. We then went to the Capitol. We admired the high finish of the Rotunda, the western steps and the circular terrace, which you may remember to have seen begun before you left us. On its top is a fine walk, and it is, as a whole, much commended by strangers. If you wish to see one of your father's reports on the work, Thomas can lend it you, or George, as he sent one to each of them.

A letter of March 22, 1827 (or, 1828) gives a glimpse of their social life. It is to Thomas from his mother: —

. . . Last evening we all went by invitation to tea at

Judge Cranch's; met a rather large circle. . . . There were plenty of members of Congress, one or two *belles*, and a Bishop Chase of Ohio. . . . He is a noble looking son of the Church, handsome and easy in his manners. He is here to petition Congress to give him a township of land to assist him to establish a college in Ohio. His building is now nearly up, and he is as enthusiastic as good men usually are, when engaged in any scheme of what they think great usefulness. He spent an evening here lately, giving us an interesting account of his visit to England. . . .

We spent our evening at the Judge's in the usual walking-about manner; two musical instruments, one in each room. . . . At half-past ten, papa and I, arm in arm, walked homeward, the moon shining sweetly, and the weather such as you have in June.

Mr. Blanchard was then preaching for them, with Mr. Stetson, of Medford, to come next. "We admire them all in turn," Mrs. Bulfinch writes. Of her own kind relations to the young divinity students her son writes a little later: —

. . . I am truly glad to hear how well you and brother Putnam [afterwards Dr. Putnam, of Roxbury] like each other. I must (whether it be good faith or no) extract a couple of lines from his letter. "I drank tea," says he, "with your mother this evening. I felt as if I were by the side of my own good mother. She seems the mother of all good boys in the world."

Mrs. Bulfinch writes on December 20, 1828: —

. . . "Your father is well, and quite satisfied with the

manner his year's work is spoken of by the members of Congress. Yet he may not have anything from them to do next year. However, we leave that concern, as we ought to all that is connected with us, to an overruling Providence."

The health of their daughter, Susan Hall, had been always delicate. She was fond of the mild climate of Washington, and had been the better for her life there, but as the spring of 1829 came on she failed rapidly, and died before the end of May. Her parents met the bereavement with that religious trust and elevation of character which distinguished them, but her mother wrote, "This event makes a chasm in our circle which we shall perceive while we remain here. We do not yet know what effect it will have on our future determinations. I feel as if nothing here can reconcile me to remain long separated from New England ties," and all realized that one of the strongest reasons for a continued residence in Washington had been removed. The way for a return seemed opening also in another direction.

By the completion of his great work, the Capitol of the United States, Mr. Bulfinch's employment under government was drawing to its close. Early in the summer of this year, and a month after his daughter's death, he received a communication not wholly unexpected from the Commissioner of Public Buildings, which we give below, together with the words of the architect in reply, addressed to President Jackson, and the President's response : —

FROM J. ELGAR.

WASHINGTON, June 25, 1829.

SIR, — I am directed by the President to inform you that the office of Architect of the Capitol will terminate with the present month.

Respectfully I remain

Your faithful and obt. Svt.

J. ELGAR.

MEMORIAL TO PRESIDENT JACKSON, ON CLOSE OF MY SERVICES.

The Commissioner of Public Buildings has given information that the President of the United States has directed that the office of Architect of the Capitol should cease at the close of the present month.

From the tenor of the law of the last session I was prepared for the termination of my employment when the work now in hand should be complete, and supposed from the assurances of the committee of Congress upon the public buildings, that I should be retained until the last of September.

I am apprehensive that the Commissioner has been more forward than his duty required, in stating the propriety of my immediate dismissal. It is true that my services are not so indispensably necessary as at many other stages of the work, and that I have arranged all the plans, and progress has been made in preparing materials. But there are yet several portions of the work in hand, and one of particular weight and massiveness, which require the superintendence of an Architect.

I regret that the Commissioner's statement has been acted upon without affording me an opportunity of explanation. I feel grateful for the liberal indulgence with

which my labours have been received ; I wish to close them honourably, and not to carry with me, by leaving work in an unfinished state, the impression of censure by an abrupt dismissal.

I most respectfully suggest, that if the President should think proper to recall his orders, and continue my employment for another quarter, it would ensure the right execution of the work ; it would gratify my feelings, in closing my labours, with satisfaction, and my time would be at the command of the Government to visit the Navy hospital at Norfolk, if the public service should seem to require it, and to make inquiry into its actual situation, and reports of the proceedings there as might lead to more correct prosecution of those distant works in future.

The above is respectfully submitted to the consideration of the President of the United States, by one who feels a pride in his profession, and who would regret the appearance of censure, more than the loss of the emoluments of office.

With great respect,

CHARLES BULFINCH,

Architect of Capitol U. S.

June 27, 1829.

FROM PRESIDENT JACKSON.

WASHINGTON, June 27, 1829.

SIR, — Your note of this morning has been received. As the law under which you have been employed makes the period of your services depend upon their necessity, it became the duty of the President, as soon as he was advised that the public buildings had so far advanced as no longer to require them, to notify you accordingly. But it was far from his intention in so doing to manifest the slightest dis-

approbation of the manner in which you had discharged your duties. The superintendent of the buildings had reported that they were so far advanced as not to require the employment of the architect. Of course the President, whose duty it is to guard against a wasteful expenditure of the public money, was bound to direct his discharge.

Your suggestion in regard to the work at Norfolk will receive the most respectful consideration.

Your obt. servt.

ANDREW JACKSON.

It would appear that my grandfather's request to be allowed to complete his work was granted, from the allusions we find in letters written later in the summer. He writes to Thomas on August 3, 1829 : —

“ I have executed my commission to Norfolk and handed in my report ; the Sec'y of the Navy has, however, been absent till within a few days, and so occupied since his return that the hospital subject could not be attended to. I have seen him, and he understands that I hold myself in readiness for his orders. I may be sent again to Norfolk, but do not expect that I shall be wanted to fix there. We frequently talk over the subject of future movements. Sometimes we strongly incline to take lodgings immediately at Cambridge, while at others it strikes us as more advisable not to make the change, as Winter is coming on, but to remain here till Spring, which would give me a chance of seeing if anything would occur in Congress to give employment in another season.”

TO THOMAS BULFINCH FROM HIS MOTHER.

August 21, 1829.

. . . As to ourselves, although the Government may suspend or cut off our pay, yet you must recollect I informed you we are not left unprovided. Your father assures me he can continue housekeeping this winter *easily*, especially if our two gentlemen, Charles and Mr. H., board with us, which they wish to do. And even after that we can save up something to continue along our own support without giving you any concern about us. Thus you see I am calculating upon remaining as we are. At the Hospital, there are enough to go on with the work, though it may possibly happen your father will undertake to overlook them by going down to Norfolk once or twice during the winter. As yet nothing of the kind is settled. If this should be the case, I am pleased to think I have been once, and have seen that it is easy and pleasant enough to go there by a good steamboat in 24 hours, to the wharf in Norfolk, and a safe tow-boat which crosses the river continually carries one to Portsmouth, opposite the city, to the old fort, where the Hospital stands, and where Capt. Wheeler, clerk of the works, and his agreeable lady, are ready to perform all the duties of hospitality. In this way the coming season may wear away, but next Spring I do hope something may occur to justify us in returing to live with those whom it is most natural to love and associate with. . . . The church is one of those concerns we wish to leave settled and prosperous whenever we take our departure. . . . I will conclude by a request of your father, viz: that you will send us, by an early opportunity,  $\frac{1}{2}$  a quintal of good salt fish. We find it difficult to procure any tolerable ones here.



In regard to the church, we find that a letter was written by Mr. Bulfinch in May, addressed to Greenleaf at the Divinity School, and setting forth the reasons why the society had adopted the measure of sending agents North to collect money from their friends.

Since the death of Mr. Little, an event which he had feared would disperse them, the members of the society had kept together beyond his expectations, but they had been unfavorably affected by several causes. The change of administration had deprived them of some valued members. Other churches had been built in their neighborhood. Their debt of six thousand dollars was a heavy drag upon them. It was secured by mortgage upon the property, but the interest was a burden which reduced their little resources, and discouraged others from joining them. The Rev. Mr. Bigelow was about to leave, having been with them seven months, but finding the outlook unfavorable to a permanent settlement.

“Under these circumstances our people have been roused to exertion, and have subscribed about one third of the amount of the debt, to be paid when the residue shall have been obtained elsewhere.

“Our agents are going on to make an attempt for our full relief. It is not intended that they shall apply to a few rich men for large sums, but that they shall endeavour to make ours a common cause with all the friendly churches; asking for small but numerous subscriptions, and if only 150 dollars can be collected, or 200 at most, on an average, from each society, the object can be effected without burthen to any one. They intend to begin with Mr. Motte’s society, and proceed regularly through Boston to Salem, calling on friendly churches by the way.

“I have been thus particular, to enable you to explain

the wants of the Church, the nature of the effort now making, and our hopes of a favourable result, and wish you to show this to Mr. Higginson, Uncle Coolidge and your brothers, not to excite them to any great exertion in this cause, but to explain why the society has looked to me for advice and direction, and which, from my situation and standing among them, I have not been able to refuse."

At the present day the Unitarian society in Washington, having survived the perplexities and trials of its early years and of many later ones as well, is established in a handsome modern building, known as "All Souls' Church," with a good degree of prosperity. Its bell, cast in the foundry established by Paul Revere, is said to have tolled the death knell of John Brown of Harper's Ferry. The old church where it hung at the time of that event, and the one designed by Mr. Bulfinch, is still standing, though deprived of its cupola and now used for a police court house.

A penitentiary was also built in Washington by the architect during his residence there. Of this, the two wings still remain, and are used as officers' quarters, connected with the artillery barracks. The main building was taken down some years ago, to give additional area to the parade ground.

Mr. Bulfinch writes to Greenleaf on March 5, 1830:—

"Our destination is yet undecided. I may have employment in this city or in Philadelphia for one more summer, but this is uncertain. The Building Committee have unanimously reported in favour of allowing me a sum for extra services and expenses of removal."

On the 23d of the same month he sends a letter giving his formal sanction to the son's plan for spending a year as a preacher in Georgia, with advice as to care of health,

manners, mingling in society, etc., and expressing his confidence in the high principles of the youth, while warning him against temptation. His tone of unquestioned authority has a sound that is now unfamiliar to our ears. He concludes:—

“You have, however, as yet, been among partial friends, and are now for the first time to mix with strangers. . . . You will be called upon to defend and explain your peculiar religious opinions, and you should do so, clearly and openly, but without severity and sarcastic reproaches against others, and if they revile, let it pass, but revile not again.”

Their own church was now hoping—though the hope proved vain—to secure a young preacher of great ability, the friend of Emerson and the Transcendentalists, and who was destined to become recognized as the profoundest spirit of the Unitarian movement on this side the Atlantic, Dr. Frederic Henry Hedge. Mrs. Bulfinch writes in May, 1830:—

“You may be surprised to learn that Mr. Hedge, who has succeeded Mr. Upham in our church, has pleased the people so well that they talk of giving him an invitation to settle here. Mr. Upham had so delighted us by his good talents, and most engaging personal qualities, that when we saw Mr. Hedge, before hearing him preach, we all thought he must appear after Mr. Upham to great disadvantage, but at the sound of his fine powerful voice, and his correct reading, and at the delivery of his superior compositions, all fears of that sort vanished at once. . . . He has gone home now to consult his friends, I suppose, and doubtless a fair friend who is to become his partner in all earthly concerns this next Summer.”

## LETTER ON LEAVING WASHINGTON.

WASHINGTON, June 3<sup>d</sup>, 1830.

DEAR GREENLEAF, — I date from this place for the last time; we have taken places in the stage and leave for Baltimore at 2 o'clk. We have not time to dwell upon regrets, &c., at leaving friends who appear sincerely attached to us, and a place which has given us a pleasant and respectable home for 12 years, and where we leave memorials of us which we hope will long endure. Charles has taken lodgings at Mrs. Myers' on the avenue, and the Dr. has opened an office also on the avenue, adjoining McCormick's apothecary shop. The situation promises well; the neighborhood is improving, by new buildings and new families, every month. . . .

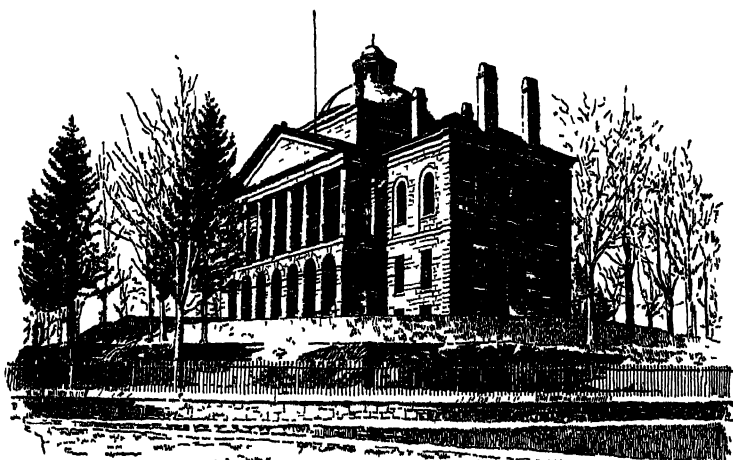
Mr. Palfrey has been here one Sunday and one week. We are much pleased with his conversation and manners, but he has not weakened the impression made on the society by Mr. Hedge, who has received a call, and his answer is shortly expected. . . . I have delayed writing to this morning, in hopes of receiving a letter from you, and am now compelled to be very short, so many petty concerns are to be attended to, and we are subject to so many interruptions from friends making their last call.

We now look to the return to former friends for future comforts and pleasures. Your brother George has remained with us to this time, and accompanies us home. Your mother's health is much as usual, and her feelings and remembrance of you as warm as ever.

With prayers that all the changes of our lives may terminate for good, I am

Yours affectionately,

C. BULFINCH.



## CHAPTER X

RETURN TO NEW ENGLAND. — CONCLUSION

1830 — 1844

Therefore to whom turn I but to thee, the ineffable Name ?  
Builder and maker, thou, of houses not made with hands !

ROBERT BROWNING.

THE last chapter of my grandfather's life may be divided into three periods. In the first of these, we find the husband and wife living for the most part in Boston, usually boarding with Mr. Brigham in Bumstead Place, and often spending the summer with their relatives the Vaughans in Maine, while one summer was passed at Northampton.

They did not again establish a home of their own, for the sons realized that their parents were growing old, and feared that household cares would tax their mother's strength too far. An addition was made to their resources

about this time, through legacies from some of the English relatives, amounting in all to near three thousand pounds, which helped to make them comfortable and independent.

The second period is that when my grandparents revisited Washington in September, 1838, to pass the winter in the family of their son Greenleaf, who had just suffered the loss of his young wife, and who was settled as minister over the parish they were so much attached to.

Here they were warmly welcomed by old friends, and improved the opportunity to mark the changes and growth of the capital. They returned North in the spring. Their old pleasant family circle had now been much contracted by the death of relatives. The sisters were gone, and, of the brothers-in-law, "Uncle Coolidge" alone remained.

The third period begins when, Mr. Coolidge's health being in a precarious condition, his daughters invited my grandparents to cheer them with their presence in the old home in Bowdoin Square, whither they removed in October of 1839, and which they never afterwards left.

The first letter we give is one written by Mrs. Bulfinch immediately after their return to Boston on the completion of the Capitol. George, who attended his father when he first took up his government work, was now, as it chanced, the one to accompany his parents home.

From some allusions in the letters, it would appear that my Uncle George was the one who inherited most distinctly a love for architecture, though all the sons possessed a correct eye, and a ready use of the pencil. In this connection I have heard an amusing anecdote from my father, that, when my grandfather was asked if he should train up any of his children in his own profession, he replied, with charming naiveté, that he did not think there would be much left for them to do. The States and prominent

towns were already supplied with their chief buildings, and he hardly thought a young man could make a living as an architect.

The old estate at Fresh Pond, which Madam Bulfinch often visited and described in her letters, and from which Hannah Bulfinch now writes, a delightful country home, was occupied at this time by Uncle and Aunt Storer.

FROM MRS. BULFINCH TO GREENLEAF BULFINCH.

FRESH POND, June 18, 1830.

DEAR GREENLEAF, — We wrote to you previous to our leaving Washington, and supposing you will wish to know how we fared thro' the long journey homeward, I devote a leisure hour this morning to informing you all about it. The date will show that we are safe under the roof of our kind friends. Our reception has been such as to comfort and cheer us under the fatigues and disagreeables of a breaking up of our own domestic life. The journey was not unpleasant, altho' my age (not to say your father's, for he is finely) has sometimes been oppressed with the variety I have had to go thro', but thanks to a protecting and sustaining Providence I feel now able to proceed in the course we have marked out. We left Charles and Mr. Hall and Apthorp with rather less reluctance as they were disposed to try their luck in the great City, and tho' they felt sober at parting yet hope was ready at hand to give them a glance of the future, and a possibility at least of meeting again. Apthorp has taken an office on the avenue next door to M'Cormick's apothecary Store, and as they are old acquaintances he may be favored by this circumstance. When we arrived in Boston we found ourselves comfortably lodged at your Aunt Coolidge's, herself and family gone to the Springs etc., and desiring we should put up at her

house as long as our convenience required. Four days we remained, and the following Sunday Evening Uncle S. took us to this sweet and pleasant spot, now more beautiful than usual by the roses being in full bloom. The weather has been cool, our friends appear well and happy, and we have had many friendly calls from old friends; among the list Mr. and Mrs. Higginson have come forward in the kindest manner. They took tea here day before yesterday. She talks of writing to you and I hope she will, as such a correspondent is quite a distinction. Your letters have become very valuable; we get a sight of one now and then besides what you write us. . . .

HALLOWELL, June 29<sup>th</sup>.

We have been comfortably settled in this most pleasant place about 6 days, and as you will readily believe *delightfully to myself*. We have found our good friends well, and their place highly improved; indeed, let us look where we will, the handsome white buildings on the cultivated hills meet our eye between Hallowell and Augusta. Augusta, that word takes my imagination from *Maine* to *Georgia* in a moment and I am longing to know how you are! I feel impatient for intelligence from you, as 't is a month since we heard. Your father says there must be a letter on the road. I hope so, and that it may soon come to hand. How should you like to have me tell you the manner in which we pass our quiet day? I will, as I have no news to write, and this may interest you. In the morning, after our breakfast, we go into another parlour, and Charles V. reads a chapter in the Bible, when we all kneel and your Uncle reads a prayer; we then rise and walk about to admire the prospect, the Chaise is soon at the door and Charles and a young lady who boards here and keeps the infant school, ride a mile to the Village. I retire to my



room and your father and Uncle walk out for a stroll. Your Aunt and Cousin H. F. and myself sit down to our needle. We dine at 1 o'clk, afterwards find our needle or book or pen a resource for an hour or two, when if we wish to ride or walk we can do it, as there are two chaises to be had. After tea we have music, and here I find great indulgence to my fondness for this lovely art. Charles plays readily and sweetly on the flute and bass viol. H. F. sings finely, accompanying her Piano ; Miss Turner also sings — and so harmoniously do we go on, that 10 o'clock comes ere we think how time has sped along. After this, Uncle calls us to prayers, and we end the calm day as we began it. You ask how long we are to remain in this happy situation? If we were to comply with the earnest invitation of our friends it would be through August, but your father will not incline to be till then out of the way of business, so that in all probability the first week in that month will see us on our way home to Boston. Farewell my dear and much loved Greenleaf. This letter is perhaps, the first page of it, a repetition of what I have written before, but you will I hope accept it willingly, as it informs you of our welfare and of the continued affection of your mother.

We know very little of any professional work of her husband's after his return to the North. He was now sixty-seven years of age, still ready for work and anxious not to be idle, but his tasks were over and the time for rest had come. Perhaps he found more employment for his talents during these early years after his return than we know of, but only one work is recorded, that of the State House at Augusta, Maine, which was finished and occupied in 1832, and is still in use.

Maine did not become a State until 1820, and Portland had been at first the seat of government. Augusta having been fixed upon in 1827 as the future capital, a commissioner was appointed the following year to obtain plans and estimates for a building, and he made application to Mr. Bulfinch. "The council adopted the plan by a resolution dated February 2, 1829, stating the dimensions, referring to it as the work of Bulfinch, and as 'representing the Boston State House reduced to the dimensions aforesaid.'" Mr. Willard speaks of it as "like the Boston State House and yet different; enough like it to show that Bulfinch was still willing to abide by that design in the main, sufficiently different to show that his own taste had changed with the general change of taste which gradually took place during his professional career. There is the same high basement, pierced by entrance arches, without high fronting steps. There is the same placing of the portico, but its treatment in detail is more regular. The columns are single, and the pediment is the full width of the portico, and rests directly upon it. It is in the dome and its support that the departure from the earlier design is more striking." The lines which he adopted in the General Hospital at Boston are those reproduced here.

I find in a letter of his son George, of July, 1830, his parents being then in Maine, that "Father has been promised one hundred dollars for some additional services to the State House there." This is the only mention of the work in the letters.

FROM MRS. BULFINCH TO GREENLEAF BULFINCH.

BOSTON, Sept. 26, Sunday, 1830.

MY BELOVED GREENLEAF, — There is no day in a week, that brings you so clearly to my mind's eye and so warms

my heart toward you as Sunday. I see you in your study and in your church, among your people assembled to listen to your dear voice, and then in the circle which has been mercifully appointed to be to you instead of parents and brethren. This is Sunday; the rain keeps me from Church tho' the Gentlemen are gone. I turn as usual to you the youngling of our flock, so far distant in person, but near in imagination and in spirit. . . .

We have indulged ourselves with one or two rides of late; and they have been productive of much pleasure. It is delightful to witness the improvements which have been going on thro' the 12 years of our absence, both in town and country, and to judge from the increase of neat houses in the Villages round Boston we should believe that the people were very generally prosperous; but nothing has given your father and myself more genuine satisfaction than a visit we lately made to Dr. Freeman. Instead of seeing him bowed down with disease we were surprised at his coming out to the door to receive us, with a healthful glow on his face, and a cheerful expression that told of renovated health and strength. . . .

On Monday we went to Cambridge to make some calls. We rode to Mr. Higginson's first, saw the ladies, and admired his pleasant house and situation. Mrs. H. always mentions you with so much kindness as to delight me. Miss Storrow said they missed you very much when you left them. This was the first opportunity I have had of seeing Professors' Row. The afternoon was fine, and the scenery beautiful.

We proceeded next to President Quincy's, and were received in a very friendly manner. They invited us to stay to tea, but we wished to go to Fresh Pond, so bade them farewell, and went to take tea with Uncle and Aunt Storer.

They are preparing to leave that place, to reside for the winter nearer Cambridge Village. Have taken lodgings in the house belonging to the Botanic garden. . . . We are glad of this arrangement, as for winter the Pond is too remote and inaccessible at times for any one, almost, who has not a hardy constitution. . . . Your brothers T. and G. are well. You may suppose we do enjoy being together. That you may soon be added to the number is the earnest wish of

Your affectionate mother.

FROM CHARLES BULFINCH TO GREENLEAF BULFINCH.

Boston, March 28<sup>th</sup>, 1831.

. . . You have not of late, my dear Son, received anything direct from your father's hand; your mother's readiness of communication and warmth of feeling have made full amends for any failure of my more prosaic epistles. You must not think however that I feel less warmly all that interests you. Our letters are written and read jointly and express our united sentiments. I have forwarded to you papers which show you some of the exciting subjects under discussion: Mr. Beecher's attack upon the Catholics, answered by a series of lectures from the champions of that faith, stated in a coarse manner, very different from what the judicious and polished Bishop Cheverus would have adopted. We have kept ourselves quietly at home during the winter, but our citizens have found full amusement in the theatrical performances of a wonderful boy, and in numerous courses of lectures, religious and scientific; among others your friend Dr. Follen is engaged in a course of an abstruse and metaphysical kind, which is well attended by upwards of two hundred of the prime of the society of the city, and much approved of. . . .

C. B.

I find no clue to the year when the following note, bearing on some unexplained subject, was written, but it may have been near this period. Thomas appears to have been then in Washington.

BOSTON, May 21.

D<sup>r</sup>. THOS., — The oftener I look over the proposals for the bridge, the more am I convinced of the magnitude of the undertaking. There is no prospect of any one who acts understandingly being willing to contract for the materials and work entire. Indeed such a contract to such an extent was never made in any part of the world. The new Waterloo bridge, over the Thames at London, which Mr. McLean must be well acquainted with, is only 1000 or 1200 ft. long and cost *one million* pounds Stlg. — the one proposed is to be nearly 5000 ft., with much greater depth of alluvial to be removed for the piers. . . . I think that the only safe way for the government or the contractors would be, to build all the piers before any attempt should be made to turn any of the arches — then any one might contract for one or more entire piers, and separate piers might be in building at the same time — when complete, the arches might be contracted for, or undertaken in the same way. At any rate, I think that it will require 10 years, or more probably 20, to finish it. Are they aware of the Difficulty and expense of coffer-dams and the mass of timber work, and that of the very best construction, for forming Centres for arches of 96 ft. span? let them look well to it.

Yrs. ever.

It was a grief to Mrs. Bulfinch that so few of her children should marry, and in June, 1831, we find her writing to her "son David" in Washington: —

"Your letter convinces me, my dear friend, of your con-

tinued tender remembrance of one who, if her affection were to be the test of her merit, deserved all you have felt. But, two years have elapsed, and I now rather hope to learn that another worthy woman may have engaged your *thoughts*, at least. Believe me, I shall rejoice to discover this. Your heart and temper were never meant for solitude; you can receive happiness and communicate it by the domestic tie. Do not then much longer deny yourself this first of human comforts.

“We in our advanced age are receiving from each other’s society the best enjoyments of which we are permitted to partake, — the united prayer, the confidential converse, the quiet readings, or the peaceful walks along our pleasant common. I often think we are far more dependent upon each other now than in early life, when almost everything besides was capable of communicating pleasure.”

To Charles she writes that they comfort themselves with the hope that when they were able they did not indulge idle habits of mere self-indulgence.

Their happiness in these years was increased by the society of their brother and sister Storer, who, boarding also in Bumstead Place and under the same roof, enlarged the family circle most pleasantly. They played whist together, and shared the same employments in many ways. On Sundays they were seen together in their pew at the chapel.

In the spring of 1832 my grandmother writes to Mr. Hall: —

“You mentioned in a late letter the probability of the alterations in the Hall of Representatives; and you then inquire whether Mr. B. would wish to undertake them, if they are voted for. In answer to this he says that it must be another session before the business can be attended to by Congress. By that time he may be unfit for the employ-

ment ; but if, at that time, health and strength should still be left to take such a journey, and the employment can be had, we shall be glad to have a chance of seeing you and Charles, besides dear old acquaintances, and the interesting city where we passed so many happy years ; but now we must look upon it rather as a pleasant imagination than as a matter of probability."

In February, 1834, Thomas writes of his parents' pleasant situation. His father's cheerfulness is unimpaired, in spite of some infirmities, "and his quiet, benevolent, good sense mingle in our conversation, winning, as you have always known it to do, the respect and regard of those around, with something like reverence from the younger part of our boarding-house circle. He takes an interest in all that concerns the community, and presents a picture of an amiable and charming old age. God grant he may be spared to us many years. Our mother is less infirm than he, yet suffers with headache and rheumatism. She is going on as usual, making all those within her reach to love her, for she has so much affectionateness in her own disposition that a return of it from others is matter of course:"

At this time they were enjoying the society of two young friends, Miss Dillaway and her brother, to whom they became much attached, and who in their turn regarded Mr. Bulfinch and his wife with an almost filial affection.

The year 1836 brought them a great sorrow in the death of their dear son Apthorp, who died at his post of duty as a physician in a remote town in Georgia, during an epidemic of fever, before his friends had learned even the fact of his illness.

The next letter is written two years later, after their arrival in Washington, at their son's house : —

FROM CHARLES BULFINCH TO THOMAS BULFINCH.

Sunday, 28 Oct., 1838.

DEAR THOS.,—Although I have been here 4 weeks nearly, yet from the ample accounts which your mother has given to yourself and others, which have undoubtedly been read by you, I find but little to communicate. We have been received with a kindly spirit of welcome, and pleased with a general air of improvement. To descend to particulars, I find the same unfinished and vacant appearance in most of the streets as heretofore, the more striking after viewing the compact and elegant style of Philadelphia. I yesterday took my second walk to the west end, left my card at Mr. Woodbury's office and at the President's, — both gentlemen being inaccessible, — one really from home, and the Pres. engaged on business. This walk, on a very fine day, gave me the opportunity of viewing the *white house* and its grounds — and these I found most decidedly improved; the old stone wall removed and replaced by an open paling of wood, but representing iron; the sweep in front of the house much enlarged, so that instead of the former uninteresting small grass plat bounded by chains [?] there is now a large space enclosed by a low iron railing of a rich pattern and the interior handsomely decorated by trees and shrubs, the grounds round the house equally embellished in good taste, all worthy of the head of the Nation, whoever he may be. I have twice viewed the new Treasury building, so much the subject of remark and criticism, in and out of Congress. It appears to me wonderful that the work was not arrested long since, before such progress was made as presented an extreme difficulty in making any alteration, and before it seemed to become involved in the feelings of party. The situation is exceed-



ingly unfortunate, and I am more fully convinced than ever that my proposal to reduce its extreme length was the most adviseable that could be adopted ; — but they are going on with the building within 10 ft. of the State department, which looks like a wren box beside it, and which I presume will ultimately be taken down : — the new building is not roofed, but the lower story is finishing, and Mr. Woodbury means to occupy it this winter, thereby putting a stop to all further talk of taking down, and showing his confidence in its stability. A new building for the Patent office is in progress, on an immense scale ; it is of free stone, the walls of the 2nd Story nearly carried up. The floor of the Rep<sup>s</sup> room is reinstated as formerly, only raised as high as the South platform, the furniture not yet replaced. The money spent on these public works is of great service to the city and gives an air of business and cheerfulness. We begin upon the repairs of the church to-morrow ; the impossibility of getting workmen has delayed us hitherto.

Before their return the news reached them of the death of two of the beloved New England circle. In this letter from my grandmother she alludes first to the loss of “ Aunt Storer,” their sister Anna.

FROM MRS. BULFINCH TO THOMAS BULFINCH.

WASHINGTON, May 19, 1839.

DEAR THOMAS, — Mr. Hall performed the friendly office you requested in your last letter to him, and communicated the painful tidings of our dear sister's death in as gentle a manner as possible. You may imagine the surprise and grief it naturally excited. Her last letter did mention a cold and headache, but we thought not of any danger connected with such complaints, and looked forward with fond

expectation to the meeting in a week or two. Yes, dear T., this is sad indeed, to be so suddenly checked in our pleasing anticipations; for, as you say, no more in this world shall we enjoy each other's society, but can only treasure up the recollections of her love for us all, and the blessed hope of a reunion in a happier state.

Your father has within a day or two gained strength, so that it seemed as if he might venture to go to church the next day, and under this impression we were sitting at tea, on Saturday evening, when Mr. H. came in with letters. We were very glad to see him safe back again, as his wife<sup>1</sup> was very unwell. This subject engrossed us till after he made a pause, and said something of unpleasant news. This immediately attracted our serious attention, and the truth was told. Your father bore it with his usual calmness, and after Mr. H. left us, read yours and a kind, consolatory letter from our friend Mrs. Joy. Here his voice failed him, and Greenleaf finished our task, and a sad evening followed, and a headache has been oppressing my faculties this day. Our dear G. made his services accord with our grief, and though, not direct or too particular, prayed for the bereaved; and in his sermon, the text of which was, "Be strong in the Lord," conducted us to the only support for weak and sorrowing mortality. Your father was able to attend, for the first time, with one exception, for four months, and this day would have been a great comfort to us, but for the afflicting news of the previous evening. But we are disposed to acknowledge the goodness of our God, and to say that his hand has by a short time of suffering removed this dear friend, who was always ready to be called. The pain is felt by those of us

<sup>1</sup> Mr. David A. Hall was twice married after the death of his first wife, Susan Bulfinch.

who have loved her and revered her virtues. I think if I did not see your father much better, I could hardly command myself to write a word ; but Oh ! how merciful is the Disposer of events ! He enables us to bear his will, and shall I not do it ? he supports our failing strength, and spares us a little before we go hence. You must, dear Thomas, have had your affectionate feelings greatly tried through the past season ; but you must be comforted with the idea of having been useful to such a valued relative.

Saturday, 26. Since writing the above we have heard of the death of our brother Vaughan, and though two days have passed since, I can hardly write with a steady hand, I have been so shocked with such a succession of sad events. Yet my reason is convinced that he has gone in the right time. His work on earth was done ; his children all happily settled, and such children as he could wish to succeed him, and to follow him to a heavenly home. He was spared the pain of protracted weakness and infirmity, and, like our sainted sisters, fitted, if mortals could be, for acceptance there.

They returned to Boston to spend the summer and removed to Bowdoin Square in October. The old house had seen many changes in the hundred and more years that had passed since the first doctor and his bride came to their new home at West Boston.

From one of the Coolidge family, a niece of the architect, we are able to listen to a minute and vivid account of what it was like when Charles Bulfinch returned to his birthplace.

We can see in all its appointments the handsome and thoroughly furnished Boston home of that epoch. It was a three-story house of wood, a little withdrawn from the

street, with a row of five Lombardy poplars in front, and a gate which opened on a white marble walk leading to the front door. We know its summer parlor with white paneling and French furniture, and its winter parlor or sitting-room with an arched recess on either side the fireplace. Through one of these, towards Chardon Street, a passage leads to the large dining-room. The entry extends through the house, and the eastern door opens into a paved courtyard. In summer the open doors are sheltered by green blinds, and the rooms are scented after a shower by the sweet honeysuckle outside. Here on the roof of the stable is the great square pigeon-house, well known to the children.

We have a description of each room in the building, the many bed-chambers with their solid old furniture, the small library on the second floor, and the tall clock on the landing of the upper staircase. The two kitchens, even, are remembered in all their details, and we see the equipment required for cooking at their open fires, where in the chimneys were still the crane, the pothooks and trammels, and the iron wheel of the smoke-jack. Here, too, was the large screen lined with tin to protect the workers from the heat. From the paved yard a few steps in a grassy bank led down beneath an arched gateway to the garden. Here was the great horse-chestnut tree brought from abroad by one of the Apthorps, and at the end of the main walk a summer-house with the large pear-tree near it of family tradition, and other fruit-trees, and trellised grapevines, with all the variety of flowers that had given the architect's mother so much delight.

The neighborhood had probably seen more alterations than the mansion. Mr. Theodore Lyman's house had long superseded the dwelling of the Chardons, and was now

itself to make way for the stone church that we see there. At the other corner of Chardon Street the Parkman family were still in possession of their old homestead; but the Boott mansion had been raised and enlarged to form the famous hostelry of the Revere House, and the wooden dwellings and shops were giving place to brick houses on every side.

The autumn of the next year following the removal to the square saw the death of Mr. Coolidge, their beloved and generous host, and the subsequent breaking up of his household, but the mansion with its furnishings was rented as a boarding-house to a person well known to the family, and my grandparents remained undisturbed in the familiar rooms.

A greater change, however, than any of these removals was to take place. My grandfather was now called to part with his cherished companion. The two could not walk together quite all the road to "those dark gates across the wild." The winter after they went to the Coolidges was severe, and my grandmother suffered much from rheumatism, her old enemy. In the spring of 1841, on April 8, with little warning of danger, she passed away at night while asleep. The evening before her last illness began she had remained below with the family later than usual. "The conversation turning on Washington, President Harrison's death led them to speak of the Congress burying ground; and she described it to the girls, and went upstairs and got some verses of Greenleaf's upon the subject, which Mr. L. read aloud to them. You know my mother's fondness for the spot where her Susan lies. But the recollection was not saddening, but pleasing; and she left them in her usual cheerful manner, complaining playfully, as she rose to go, of the rheumatism, which as usual attacked her on moving."

The loveliness of her manners, springing from the goodness of her heart, had made her friends wherever she was known, and, as Thomas continues, —

“ Having all her life filled rather conspicuous stations, at first as an heiress of rare expectations, next as wife of the head of the town government, then as one of the principal residents of Washington, of those of Northern connexions, and the centre of attraction for visitors from that region, she had become known to a wide circle of acquaintances. The suddenness of her death forcibly arrested attention, and the consequence of all was that her funeral was attended by a large concourse of people, that nearly filled the church. Dr. Greenwood read the service in his usual impressive manner.”

The son dwells with pleasure on the thought that her resting-place beneath the family monument in the chapel was near one of her husband's favorite works, the (then) new City Hall, which had lately been made attractive with shrubbery.

Of her husband he writes : —

“ My father bears the shock of his loss like one who feels that his portion of this world and its enjoyments has passed away ; and being ready to go, and sure that the time of his departure cannot be far distant, rests in calm trust on the goodness of that Being who gave him her whom he has lost, and is able to reunite him to her, if such is His will. He says nothing about his religion, but I am sure he feels the true spirit of it, and enjoys its consolations.”

At the time of her death my grandmother's age was seventy-four, and her husband's seventy-eight.

TO HIS SONS.

April 29, 1841.

MY DEAR SONS, — It is now three weeks since the sudden, unexpected stroke which deprived me of your excellent mother; I have not had resolution to write to any one, except to relatives in England, and H. Abbott and A. Spooner, whom the dear departed considered as her children. But Thomas has informed you of all the particulars, which I need not repeat, and which I hardly dare trust myself to dwell upon. I keep my chamber except at meals and receive frequent visits from friends, both gentlemen and ladies. These are kind attentions and meant to soothe, but the frequent repetition of circumstances which they are desirous of hearing almost unmans me. Indeed, I could not conceive that your mother was so generally known and universally loved and respected. We have sent you a number of copies of an obituary notice, which you will deliver as directed. I hope you approve of it. I wish now that I had sent one to Mrs. Taylor, and another to Mrs. Coyle, both of whom loved her, but such has been the demand for them that I have only retained for myself that contained in the Register.

While I have been engaged in one absorbing course of thought, other scenes in the outer and domestic world have been going on of an opposite character. . . . Judge and Mrs. L—— are in town, have visited me and are very kind and sympathizing. They desire remembrances to Gf. and hope to see him at Northampton in the course of the summer. They urge me much to go there, but that is out of the question. . . . Pray make my excuse to Mr. Hall for not writing to him at present, but tell him that if he will inform me to whom I can *frank* some papers for him, I shall be obliged to hear *as soon as convenient*. They are of a

public nature, my opinions on the N. E. boundary question. I am looking over my papers to relieve the tedium of my day, and find some that I wish to forward to him.

With some effort I have proceeded thus far, and ask two for one in return, and only add my wish that we may continue more attached than ever to each other.

[Postscript from Thomas.]

D<sup>r</sup>. GREENLEAF, — . . . You see father still continues able to excel us all in handwriting if not in the other departments of letter writing. He is well and composed, though not yet restored to anything like cheerfulness. It is rare to see him smile. The weather has been particularly unfavourable. Too cold and wet to allow of going out and present us agreeable scenes to look upon. Next week I think we may safely calculate on an improvement. . . .

Soon after my grandfather writes : —

DEAR GF., — . . . I pass my time almost wholly in my own room, chiefly in reading, sometimes varied by a call from some kind friend, many of whom express a feeling for my bereavement and the tenderest regard for the memory of your dear mother. I have received many sympathizing letters, two from relations in England, to whom Thomas sent copies of the obituary — all very soothing and gratifying.

I have lately read Mr. G. Combe's travels in America — very judicious and impartial — and am now engaged on Hallam's literary history of the 15th and 16th centuries. I read the English edition in 4 vols. — have yet got through only the two first — it is a work of wonderful research and highly instructive and entertaining.

Religious affairs look rather squally here. You may see



by the Register that some very illiberal feelings have given vent to severe reflections on Unitarians from Rev<sup>d</sup>. Mr. Adams, which have led to retorts; and Thomas tells me that a kind of protest has been signed by a number of Orthodox ministers, against a sermon preached by Theod<sup>s</sup>. Parker, at the ordination of a new minister over Mr. Capen's church, South Boston; it is stated to have been *ultra transcendental*. . . .

TO FRANCIS BULFINCH.

Aug. 31, 1841.

I am in hopes that our Country will soon see better times, when business will be on a safer footing. Boston appears to be extending and improving. Great expectations are formed of the benefits to be expected from various and extended railroads and steam packets. . . . Mrs. C——, wife of your cousin J. C——, has returned from China and is at present in the same house with me; she was at Macao 18 months, about 70 miles from Canton, and seeing her husband only occasionally. She is a great observer of men and things, and amuses us much with anecdotes of the Chinese and Portuguese.

A likeness was taken of Mr. Bulfinch at this time, which was considered excellent by his family. It is a drawing in India ink, made, we believe, by the late Mr. Alvan Clark, renowned for the great telescopic lenses that have since come from his hands. It has several times been copied, and is given in this volume, slightly reduced in size. A copy of it hangs upon the walls of the office of the Architect of the Capitol at Washington.

Several portraits of Mrs. Bulfinch remain, besides the miniature before described. One was taken in middle life,

with powdered hair and calm, matronly face; and another, in her old age, shows her hair still dark as in youth, and the large ruffled cap surrounding a face of much sweetness. Her husband thought the likeness excellent, and saw in it her characteristic bright expression, — in his own phrase, “her saucy look,” — but this is not so marked to a stranger.

My Uncle Thomas, who had been to his parents like a daughter as well as a son ever since his sister’s death, was now living in the house with his father, and the two were drawn still closer by this intimate companionship. Almost all the father’s letters bear a postscript from the son, adding details of the social and literary life around them and touching on his own peculiar interests, such as the Natural History Society, the Lowell Institute, etc.

After trying a change of rooms my grandfather writes as follows: —

November 30, 1841.

DEAR GF., — I remember that a few years ago an ingenious French writer, being confined to his chamber, wrote a book of “Travels Round my Room.” We have made another removal: the upper chamber was much too large for winter, and the front as much too small, so that we are now settled in the room formerly occupied by your dear mother and myself; here we have space for our furniture, and with our comforts about us.

These removals suggest, that a book of travels through the family mansion would not be without interest: every room, from the kitchen to the garret, is full of subjects of reflection that are often pressing upon me in my solitary hours; but they are in general of too sombre a cast to be capable of giving pleasure to others. I had better then turn from the past, and dwell only on the present. We

have as yet only one young gentleman, additional boarder, but expect by the 1st Dec. that Mr. and Mrs. L—— will join us; they are to have the smallest front parlour and chamber over it. They found their home very distant from all S.'s usual haunts and very much exposed to cold winds, and have agreed to pass the winter here; this will be a pleasant addition to our party.

So much on home subjects. — In the outer world, the prevailing passion of our people seems to be the attendance at Lectures; we have them of every grade: the bare enumeration of them is enough to convince one that if we are not the most intellectual city in the world, it is because we do not keep our ears and eyes open to instruction. I begin with the Lowell lectures, 5 courses, on Geology, by Mr. Lyell; on Christianity, Dr. Palfrey; on Mechanics, Lovering; on Chymistry, Silliman; and on Natural Religion, Dr. Walker.

Lectures by the Society for Diffusion of Knowledge: others, of the Lyceum, from the Mercantile library association; the Mechanic association; the Historical society; — then we have Professor Bush from New York to explain the Prophecies to us; and Mr. Miller in Chardon Street chapel, proving that the world will come to an end in the next year; Mr. Espy on Storms; Mr. Emerson on the Times; Capt. Partridge on War and preparation for it. And as if these were not enough, and perhaps because many of them, if not heretical, are at least Latitudinarian, the orthodox announce a course to be delivered by the most distinguished of their sect, from various parts of New England, avowedly on Missionary topics, but it is to be expected that they will take occasion to inculcate their peculiar tenets.

Mr. Lyell has finished his course of 12 lectures to full

audiences, and to very general acceptance. Hon. J. Q. A. has given the introductory of the Historical society — and to the surprize of everybody, undertook the defence of the English in their war on China: and so ingenious and eloquent was his discourse, that he was urged to repeat it at the Lyceum, and consented to do it.

But you must not think that we are altogether sentimental — musical performers on one string of the violin are the rage, and the *divine Fanny* has drawn enthusiastic crowds to the theatre, and even old Faneuil hall has vibrated in all its bricks and timbers in honor of a French prince. I shall enclose some accounts of this ball, which perhaps may have reached you already. . . .

From the mention of Greenough's Washington, both by you and Charles, I fear that it will cause much disappointment — it may be an exquisite piece of work, but our people will hardly be satisfied with looking on well developed muscles, when they wish to see the great man as their imagination has painted him. I send you a sort of defence of this statue from Everett, but am not convinced that the sculpture is suited for modern subjects; the dress presents insuperable difficulties. The first statue of Washington was made by Houdon, who was sent for by the state of Virginia: his work is in the Capitol at Richmond, and a more unpleasant figure was never seen. It is represented in an old fashioned coat etc. with hair dressed as he wore it, but far from picturesque with stiff ear curls and a heavy club behind. The next statue was by Chantrey in our State house, cloathed as a Roman Senator; it was highly commended at first, but is now seen with perfect indifference, it in fact wants interest. And now I fear that this with you will only give the idea of entering or leaving a bath, — but I will hope that when raised on its pedestal, the effect

will be improved, and that it will do credit to the artist and satisfy the public, but my fears prevail.

I must mention another instance of unsuccessful modern statuary: it is the Statue of the Duke of Wellington, near Hyde Park, London; it is represented as *Achilles*, naked à la Grecque, — and has even been complained of by the society for improving public morals!

From my being able to spin out so long a letter, you will conclude that I have recruited from the cold which attacked me: I am better, but expect to be much confined to the house during the winter. I have a constant succession of books, and ought to be thankful that my sight and faculties are so alive that I can take an interest and derive pleasure from them. I hope that with all my privations I shall feel grateful for the blessings left, especially the sympathy and kind regard of my sons; they may rely upon me as their affectionate father.

The next is —

April 6, 1842.

. . . I sit alone, the greater part of each day, in my chamber: if you wish to know my thoughts and reflections, read the last chapter but one in Dickens's *Barnaby Rudge*: These two closing chapters<sup>1</sup> are worth all the rest of the book, and are specimens of that talent which has made the author so popular in our country.

Several sudden deaths have happened here within a week, two of which speak very forcibly to me to be ready to follow them. One was of good Dr. Harris, whom you well knew; another, Dan. Sargent, Esq., a contemporary and companion of my early days: these were so advanced as to

<sup>1</sup> Given only in the older editions of Dickens. *Barnaby Rudge* was first published as a part of *Master Humphrey's Clock*.

excite no surprize; but a third is Rev. George Whitney, colleague of Dr. Gray of Jamaica Plain, leaving a delightful parish to you or some other favored competitor.

His reference to Master Humphrey's solitary thoughts suggested to his son the sonnet which follows: —

TO MY FATHER.

And do such thoughts beguile thy lonely hour,  
Father ! my childhood's and my manhood's guide?  
Oh well such gentle visions may have power  
To cheer thee as life's waters smoothly glide.  
Many long years upon that swelling tide  
Hast thou been wafted; oft the storm did lower  
Above, and then, on the receding shower,  
The bow of peace has spread its pinions wide.  
Gently through all and meekly hast thou borne  
Good and ill fortune ; now at eventide  
Thou stand'st, thy children's reverence and pride,  
Still gathering round, though tenderer ties be torn.  
Calm be these evening hours, and blest the morn  
Uniting those whom Death can nevermore divide !

WASHINGTON, April 25, 1842.

His father writes in response: —

BOSTON, May 3rd, 1842.

. . . Thank you for your sonnet ; it gave me pleasure to know that among your various cares and occupations you could occasionally express your thoughts in verse, for your own amusement and gratification of friends. I fervently hope to realize the pious anticipations, and will forgive the too commendatory passages. The fatal events to steam vessels in your river and at Baltimore are indeed appalling, and our own harbour has lately been the scene of an event of equal distress. You will find in a paper sent to Charles the account of the loss of 23 lads of the farm school, with one of their teachers and a skillful pilot. This was in

returning from an excursion by water, with which the boys were indulged in reward for their good conduct; and in sight of their home and of their companions on shore they were all drowned. What can we say to such occurrences? It is not right, in my mind, to attribute them to a mysterious Providence. They must arise from counteracting the *natural* laws which a good Providence has seen fit to connect with all his works, and which our willfulness makes us disregard. I suppose that on this subject I am a disciple of George Combe. If the steam frigate on the Potomac had kept continually sounding, the vessel would not have got aground; if the engineer had watched carefully the boilers of the boat at Baltimore, they would not have burst from want of water; and if the farm school boat had carried one or two more capable men to manage the sails and control 27 (?) boys in high spirits, they would have been able to encounter a sudden squall. But I am getting beyond my depth and must conclude.

[Postscript by Thomas.]

DEAR G.,—I shall put up for you a treatise on Homœopathy, and Dr. Channing on the Creole case. The former will amuse you, and the latter interest you. . . . We are growing here very scientific. The last week we have had a session every day, from  $\frac{1}{2}$  past nine till dark, of a Geological association, consisting of the geologists employed by the several States in making surveys, together with some other gents of similar tastes who have been invited to join them. Dr. Hall was with them and will be able to give you a good account of their doings. I had leisure only to spend an hour or two, of two afternoons, with them. They met in our N. Hist. room, and were very comfortably accommodated by the ostrich yielding his place and stowing closer to the rhinoceros and the elephant. . . .

*Thomas Bulfinch (son of Charles)*









That my grandfather found plenty of occupation for his leisure during these last years is shown by the papers he has left. Here are manuscripts, with memoranda of various kinds, on the Greek numerals, on statistics of population, and on the origin of the human race. Some of these are copies, some original with himself. A cutting from the "Christian Register" of April 4, 1835, contains a long contribution from his pen, on the subject of *Romanism*, the character of which may be inferred from his signature, "Conciliator," and from the concluding words, quoted from Priestley : —

"We have no doubt but that not only innumerable zealous papists, but even some Popes themselves, and since the time of the Reformation, will sit down with Luther, with Calvin, and with Socinus in the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

Biblical criticism, as it is now understood, was then scarcely recognized in this country, but from the standpoint of the old interpretation my grandfather was always interested in the subject. He indicates various lines of inquiry to his theological son, and I find a manuscript of considerable length entitled "Thoughts on Jewish Statistics, being an attempt to explain some difficult passages of ancient Jewish history, by a Layman." This has no date. Another manuscript, "On the Continuance of the Union," written when he was seventy-nine, contains a curious forecast of the future of our country and increase of population, with statistics of the duration of republics, as that of Athens, of Rome, and of the Saxon Heptarchy.

He writes also in 1842 : —

. . . You ask my opinion of Mr. Giddings' resolutions. We all here agree with him in facts ; but he is generally

blamed for bringing them forward just upon the opening of negotiations with a special envoy. Our legislature has lately done an equally foolish thing, in resolving that we ought not to yield any land in N. E. border of Maine, which can only further embarrass our negotiations.

I wish they would give *me* power to settle these difficulties, as I should not be looking forward to the *Presidency*. I think I could settle the whole in one week, and for half the money which it will probably cost in the present hands.

This fancy so attracted him that in his next letter he alludes to it again with playfulness, and goes on to give the outlines of his scheme.

At this time, I am told, he might have been often seen, a slender and very upright figure in a dark brown suit, with a slight halt in his gait, crossing from the north side of Chardon Street on his way home from his friend Dr. Parkman's library, with a bundle of books under his arm.

Certain severe criticisms upon the Capitol at Washington, and particularly upon the dome, having come to his notice, he writes to his son on the subject, and, after remarking that it was a great public work designed and executed by various architects in succession, with long interruptions, and that it was rather surprising that it presented so harmonious a whole, he continues: —

Upon my taking charge of the Capitol, I found a number of drawings of the manner in which it was intended to finish it, but it was very difficult to give the Building Committee any clear ideas upon the subject, and absolutely impossible to convey the same to the more numerous body of the members of Congress. I accordingly proposed to

have a model made to show the building in its complete state. This was made and inspected by the President and all the members of Congress, and I believe had a favorable effect in convincing them that I understood what work I had to do, and that there was some prospect of the building being finished. But there was one universal remark, that the Dome was *too low*, perhaps from a vague idea that there was something bold and picturesque in a *lofty dome*. As the work proceeded I prepared drawings for domes of different elevations, and, by way of comparison, one of a greater height than the one I should have preferred: they were laid before the Cabinet, and the loftiest one selected, and even a wish expressed that it might be raised higher in a Gothic form, but this was too inconsistent with the style of the building to be at all thought of by me.

Upon the ribs of the dome being boarded, I was so far dissatisfied as to propose to reduce it, stating that the saving in Copper would meet all the expense; but our Commissioner was not a very compliant gentleman and rested upon the Cabinet decision, and, to avoid the altercation which had been so common formerly, I yielded the point. But I should be well pleased if, when the dome requires a thorough repair, which it may in 10 or 15 years, it should be reduced in height,—not to Mr. Latrobe's design, but about half way between that and the present elevation. The foregoing will give my sons a full view of the circumstances under which some of my work was executed; but you will readily see that it is best not to make it too public. Architects expect criticism and must learn to bear it patiently, . . .

Yrs.

C. B.

The second marriage of his youngest son and the visit of

the young couple to Boston was the occasion for a gathering of friends, arranged by Mr. Bulfinch with the help of Thomas and George, the old house in the Square putting on for the time a gala appearance. My grandfather enjoyed it for his children's sake, and for the chance of meeting again the old and valued family friends. It was probably his last appearance at any scene of social festivity. After his son's return to Washington we find these passages : —

BOSTON, Jan. 31, 1843.

MY DEAR SON AND DAUGHTER, — . . . I observe by the papers that Mr. Greenough wishes to have something built in the Capitol grounds to contain his statue. I cannot think that Congress will consent to this expense; they are not so much pleased with it as to be ready to lay out much more money upon it, and any temple or room of any kind built for this purpose must be large, to view the statue at a proper distance, and must show some architectural magnificence, or it will look only like a workshop, now dignified by the name of Studio. I would propose, and I wish you to mention it to him, that the statue be placed on the middle of the upper platform of the East portico; there is I think sufficient room for it without hindering convenient access to the door: it would be a principal object to meet the eye of members and visitors immediately upon ascending the steps, and, surrounded by a rich display of columns and between *Peace and War*, would be a very appropriate situation for it; at least the experiment might be tried at little expense.

April 10, 1843.

In a letter from T. B. to Mrs. Hall about 3 weeks since, I added a postscript, asking D. A. Hall to send me any printed account of debates upon the resolutions respecting

the removal of the Statue, and for plans of a new Congress hall. Not having heard from him, I fear that the letter has not reached him; it was sent under cover to Mr. Elsworth. Will you inquire about it? Between both of you, notwithstanding the old saying of two stools, etc., I hope to receive the papers,—reports or debates. I think such subjects could not have been acted upon *sub silentio*. I have no motive for wishing for these papers but to gratify my inquisitive curiosity; but if I should give my advice, it would be to send the Statue to Athens, a present to King Otho, to be placed in the Parthenon, with other naked great men: and before they commence a new Hall, let a flat ceiling be formed over the present one to try its effect upon the voice. I find that the ablest advisers upon building the new Houses of Parliament in London recommend avoiding all *concave surfaces*.

June 12, 1843.

. . . I thank you for your sketches; they give me a very good idea of your school room and the alterations of Masonic hall. The alterations here surpass all you can conceive. I have this morning viewed those going on in Bowdoin street. Mr. Coolidge's noble mansion, trees and all, are swept away, and 5 new brick houses are now building on the spot. The same changes are taking place in Summer street,—Mr. Bussey's, Mr. Goddard's, and Mr. Ellis' houses are giving room to a great number of modern houses,—so that you see, although crowds assemble nightly to hear predictions of the speedy end of the World, still there are enough of unbelievers to go on making earthly habitations.

After a cold and backward Spring, we have lately had very pleasant weather: our garden has shown very beautifully with its trees in full blossom; I do not know when it



has been so pleasant to my feelings. I tell Thomas that it reminds me that "blessings brighten as they take their flight," for it is very uncertain whether I shall see it on another Spring, even should I be spared so long. Mrs. Wilson lies sick in a very doubtful state, and in case of her death we do not know what change may be made here. . . .

July 8, 1843

I have just sent off a trunk, to be put on board a vessel for Alexandria; you will find it contains a variety of articles, which I hope may be found useful in your new "ménage." . . .

I have added some articles of female gear; among others a gown of crimson and green striped satin. It was one of your dear mother's wedding dresses, sent to her from England: she wore it very seldom, as it was not much to her taste, and probably will not please our C—— much more; but perhaps it may be acceptable to Miss ——, but if not, as it has slept in one trunk 55 years, it may complete the Century in another, when fashion may again conform to it.

TO FRANCIS.

Jan. 5, 1843.

I notice the pleasure you express at receiving the papers which I send. I assure you it is an agreeable employment to myself to look over and cull out such as I suppose may interest you. It appears to me like talking with your family circle. I now send an Almanack to your wife, and another to present to your Postmaster, as a small acknowledgment of his kindness in handing you my papers.

He is charmed with Frederika Bremer's novel, "The Home," and the excitement about Puseyism leads him to

the study of Dr. Pusey's sermon on the Eucharist, and the reading of Southey's "History of the Church."

Southey's alleged Socinian opinions aroused his warm interest.

My grandfather had felt increasing feebleness for some months. The handwriting of the following letter is less firm : —

Sept. 18, 1843.

DEAR GF., — Yours of 31 August has been read repeatedly with great interest; the account you give of your new home is enough to tempt us at least to wish to occupy your spare chamber, — but I believe it can be only in *idea*, for the pressure of time on some and of business on others will prevent our enjoying it in *person*. The details that you give me are exactly to my taste, and the more I can have of them the better; so I wish your dear C—— to tell me where the coloured chintz is disposed of, and if indeed its colours are not too gay for a sober minister's home — and also the gay silk. Is it destined for any young bride of your acquaintance, or must it take another nap in the trunk? Who goes to market? — what neat handed Phillis brings in your Coffee pot? — or do you adopt the Graham system and pledge each other in a glass of cold water? Does dinner cool often while you flog your boys?

I have just looked over our morning's paper, in which I find statements of violent storms in your city and Baltimore. Our weather has been fine; last week it was so cold, though clear, that the summer residents at Nahant etc. were flocking home: for some days it has been beautifully clear and at 80° at noon, and was 82 on yesterday. I am not acquainted with Mr. Espy's theory, but I fear we must expect a change of wind to the East, when it may bring a violent equinoctial gale.

The most interesting news which I have to tell you is of the death of your dear and excellent cousin Harriett Abbott. She has long been in delicate health, and has at last sunk under constitutional weakness. Mr. Abbott returned from Europe about 3 weeks since, and was with her but a few days before her departure : he must most seriously feel his heavy loss, with the charge of 5 children and one of them an *infant*.

I do not know what course he will now take ; he had engaged to take his family to New York, there to establish a school for young ladies in connexion with two of his brothers. I have called to-day on Miss Sally Vaughan, who is passing a few days with a friend in Boston. She appears well, tho' depressed by the changes in her family : she tells me that her Cousin Rev. Jn. Vaughan D. D. is going to take charge of a small parish near Savannah ; the defect in his eyes will prevent him from studying or reading, but the people will be satisfied with extempore sermons ; he will trust to memory for the prayers, but must have some assistance for the psalms and lessons. . . .

Notwithstanding the unavoidable cares and troubles of life, I find that some people will get married : there's the youngest daughter of Judge L——, engaged to Mr. D——, a merchant, who intends carrying her to China in a few months. What a contrast will her round, bright eyes present to the small and sleepy ones of the Chinese beauties !

Wednesday, 20th. Our paper of this morning enlarged upon the effects of the storm at Washington and the overflow of the Potomac. Are the Poplars in 6th Street all flat, and what damage have they done to the Church ? How is your domicile ? are you overflowed, railroad, garden and all, by the swelling of the Tyber ? let us know all about it, and pray take care and keep off fever and ague.

Thus I have accomplished two short letters to yourselves and Charles : you must read them interchangeably to make one decent letter.

With the truest regard, yrs.

My letter is a picture of real life, — alternate smiles and tears.

This was not his last letter. In November he writes a pleasant little letter to his eldest grandson, far off in Georgia : “Is your house made of round logs with the bark on, or is it made of square timber? I hope that inside it is all neat, smooth and full of peace.”

And on Dec. 23 to Greenleaf and his wife : —

“We expect a great improvement soon in our family circle ; Mr. H. Mann and his wife, late Miss Peabody, are coming next week to pass the winter with us. . . . I have sent you lately such of our papers as I thought might amuse you ; but after this shall look for returns from you, not of politics, — for we have a constant supply of such subjects, — but let me know how Washington appears to enjoy his closet, and what the public think of his position and its effect. You have too, by this time, the ‘embarkation of the pilgrims.’ How is that received, and with what criticisms?”

His last note is in March, 1844, when he writes, on the 13th, to say that he is slowly recovering from a cold and touch of fever and ague, brought on by the severe weather of January, and looks for the revival that the spring days will bring. He incloses a double acrostic on the name of Daniel Webster, which he had amused himself with composing while confined to his bed. He did not write again. On April 15 Thomas sends a letter as follows : —

DEAR GREENLEAF, — Our excellent parent is no more. He died this noon, just as the family clock on the staircase struck 12. . . . For the last 24 hours . . . he has appeared free from severe pain, and lay in a dozing or half waking state, with short naps and then spells of wakefulness. . . . His voice was inaudible, but he showed that his intellect remained unimpaired, by slight circumstances from time to time, such as motioning me to the door when some one knocked, and I, having hold of his hand, did not start immediately to see who it was. . . . Several times, when he breathed more silently for a while than usual, I fancied the last struggle was at hand. But he continued so, hour after hour, with little apparent change. . . . A few minutes before his last, he stretched out his hand to me, with a kind of up and down motion, as if to shake hands. I took his hand and shook it, saying, "Farewell." . . . The funeral is to take place on Wednesday next, and I think I shall ask Dr. Parkman to officiate.

Father's numerous infirmities of late, which have been increasing since Mother's death, and which were such as to deprive life of much of its comfort, go far to reconcile me to his departure. I feel the void left by his absence, and shall for some time sensibly feel it. It was pleasant to me to find some one at home, when I returned from my business, to whom I could tell the scraps of news I had picked up during my absence, sure that he would take an interest in it if it interested me, or if it related any incident favourable to the good cause in Church or State, or beneficial or gratifying to any of his fellow creatures. I never carried him any tale of misdemeanour or misfortune, and far less any tale of scandal, with the expectation of giving him pleasure. If any such came to his ears his first impulse was not to believe it. But if it was incontrovertible, his next

recourse was to suggest extenuating circumstances, and dwell as little on the subject as possible. The severity of modern criticism annoyed him a good deal. He could not bear to hear Trumbull's pictures abused, and West's disparaged. The criticisms in the *Gentleman's Magazine* on modern English architecture gave him as much annoyance as it probably did, in some cases, the artists themselves. I will write again soon. Yrs. ever, T. B.

In an obituary notice published soon after, and from which I have several times quoted, my uncle reviews his father's long life and varied achievements, concluding with these words: —

"He put a modest estimate on his own works, and was not a severe critic of those of others. The epigram which follows was by one who knew him well, and it is true to the letter: —

" ' A wonder in our days, my friend —  
An artist I have known,  
Who never slandered others' works,  
Nor ever praised his own.' "

" . . . His faith as a Christian was founded on the broad basis of those doctrines which are common to all sects, setting but slight value on those respecting which good and wise men differ. Those grand doctrines he found sufficient to afford a resting place for his faith, — a hope sure and steadfast of a blessed immortality."

My grandfather's death occurred on Monday, the 15th of April, 1844, and his funeral took place on the 17th, at King's Chapel, where his remains were laid at first in the family tomb, but they now rest at Mount Auburn with those of his wife and several of his children. His monument is the stone urn that he gave himself to Franklin Place, on its completion near 1795, and which was returned

to his sons when the inclosure of shrubbery where it stood was removed. It is said to be probably the oldest piece of imported monumental work in the cemetery, and its associations are not out of keeping with the beautiful and quiet scene. As Mr. Willard wrote : —

“There is a noticeable quality of quiet and repose in the old mansions which Bulfinch built. How the sunshine streams down in Franklin Place! How kindly the vines take to these domestic-looking old house-fronts! How stately and dignified and well-bred they are! There is not a suggestion of the hum of business or of the bustle of crowded streets. They seem to represent the almost unrealizable idea of the city home.”

The qualities of the architect's style were those of the man himself, and that they were qualities shared by others of his generation and country all must feel who study the lives of our earlier public men.

We have quoted on the first page of this memorial volume Mr. Lowell's words on Josiah Quincy, and in the same essay we find the following, which, although applied by him to another, is equally true of the type of character represented by Charles Bulfinch : —

“Born and bred in an age of greater social distinction than ours, he was an aristocrat in a sense that is good even in a republic. He had the sense of a certain personal dignity *inherent* in him, and which could not be alienated by any whim of the popular will. There is no stouter buckler than this for independence of spirit, no surer guaranty of that courtesy which, in its consideration for others, is but paying a debt of self-respect. . . . He was a man of quality in the true sense, — of quality not hereditary, but personal. Position might be taken from him, but *he* remained where he was. In what he valued most, — his sense of personal

worth,—the world's opinion could neither help nor hinder. We do not mean that this was conscious in him; if it had been, it would have been a weakness. It was an instinct, and acted with the force and promptitude proper to such. Let us hope that the scramble of democracy will give us something as good; anything of so classic dignity we shall not look to see again."

A few words regarding the children of Charles Bulfinch, and in particular the son who had been especially the companion and support of his old age, may not be without interest here.

All of them are gone now, his son Francis, the last survivor, having died in 1887, after a period of service that covered many years in the City Treasurer's Office in Boston, and retaining his naturally great vigor and activity almost up to the very day of his departure.

My Uncle George was the first to follow his father, whom he survived about nine years, and his brother Charles, the eldest son, died after another interval of the same length. The former of these brothers is remembered by many Bostonians as for some time in charge of the old Boston Library, in the days when it still retained its rooms over the arch in Franklin Street, given to it by my grandfather.

Of my dear father, the youngest son, Greenleaf, and his ministry at the South and in New England, this is not the place to speak at length. The chief facts of his life are found in the records of that body of religious believers with whom he was identified, and his best monument is in the hearts of the people he served, by thoughtful sermon and by gentle character, as well as by hymns still familiar in many of our churches. He died in October, 1870.

My Uncle Thomas, after his father left him, pursued his



quiet bachelor life in the old neighborhood, and soon found a permanent home in one of the two handsome gray stone buildings facing down the square, built earlier, I believe, for Dr. Parkman's daughters, Mrs. Shaw and Mrs. Blake, at that time and for many years kept as a family boarding-house of the first class by Miss Easton. He had early freed himself from the perplexities of trade, and with his duties as a clerk at the Merchants' Bank he blended the enjoyments of the scholar and the *littérateur*. His room, adorned with old family portraits and furniture, was that of a student; and the volumes of Latin, Italian, German, and English classics piled on chairs and sofa were only disturbed when his hospitality suggested inviting a party of his young friends to enjoy ice-cream, and share from his windows the pleasure of witnessing some spectacle in the square below. Here we gathered, I remember, to see the young Prince of Wales and his suite arrive at the Revere House on his visit to Boston.

Outside the circle of his brothers and cousins, my uncle had a numerous acquaintance, and stood in pleasant relations with a number of his classmates, like Dr. Walker, President of Harvard, and Dr. Dalton. Prescott, the historian, was another of his class, that of 1814; and Mr. George B. Emerson, of a class three years later, was a dear friend. My uncle also valued highly his friendship with several of the cultivated women of that period.

Among his youthful friends, a peculiarly close tie existed between himself and an English lad of humble birth but brilliant promise and a sadly delicate constitution. He interested himself in his education, taught him Latin, and half adopted him, commemorating his early death in a little story, the "Boy Inventor."

To kindle high endeavor was his dearest aim. The idea of Mr. Abbey's illustrations of Sir Galahad's Quest of the Holy Grail, on the walls of the new Public Library, is completely in his spirit, and would have greatly delighted him.

His tastes were fastidious, and he never willingly bought an inferior thing, but he found his income ample for his own moderate needs, and drew on it largely for the benefit of all his friends. His resources were much increased by the sale of the "Age of Fable," the most popular of those compilations for young readers which he enjoyed so much preparing. Certainly no fairy prince nor mythical hero could have shone with a brighter lustre than this charming uncle wore to us in the generosity of his gifts and the wit and serenity of his temper. His dislike of churlishness and any form of ugliness was a marked instinct; but, although a walk across the Common was apt to make him sigh that so many strange and pitiable beings should find their way to Boston, we were sure that he might be caught on his homeward way compassionately slipping some money into their hands.

At his boarding-house, my uncle's place was always at the head of the table, and among his brothers no one could remember when he had not been easily chief.

He was one of the wardens of King's Chapel, and it is in that old church of his ancestors, whose history and liturgy interested him deeply, that I like best to remember him. On Christmas, when the air was fragrant with the wreaths of evergreen, we were often with him in his large square pew, or lingering, when the service was done, to see the old Apthorp monument and the inscriptions

"On Shirley's beauty and on Vassall's pride."

A short attack of pneumonia in May, 1867, when he was seventy years old, terminated my uncle's earthly life. It was singularly peaceful and uneventful when compared with the varying fortunes, the family cares, and the responsible activities of his father, but it was beautiful in its own harmonious development, and rich in the happiness it conferred.



## APPENDIX

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THE following list, in my grandfather's handwriting, was found among his papers. The State House in Augusta, Me., is here omitted.

It is inscribed : —

### PUBLIC BUILDINGS ERECTED AFTER THE DESIGNS AND UNDER THE DIRECTION OF CHARLES BULFINCH.

State House . . . . .	Boston . . . . .	of brick.
Court House . . . . .	do. . . . .	stone.
Court House . . . . .	Worcester . . . . .	brick.
Court House and Town Hall . . . . .	Newburyport . . . . .	brick.
Court House . . . . .	Cambridge . . . . .	brick.
Faneuil Hall . . . . .	Boston . . . . .	brick.
State Prison . . . . .	Charlestown . . . . .	stone.
County Jail . . . . .	Cambridge . . . . .	stone.
Almshouse . . . . .	Salem . . . . .	brick.
University Hall . . . . .	Cambridge . . . . .	stone.
Chapel and Library for Theological Institution . . . . .	Andover . . . . .	brick.

### Churches : —

New North . . . . .	Boston . . . . .	brick.
New South . . . . .	do. . . . .	stone.
Gothuck, in Federal St. . . . .	do. . . . .	brick.
Catholic, Franklin Place . . . . .	do. . . . .	brick.
Meeting House . . . . .	Pittsfield . . . . .	wood.
Ditto . . . . .	Weymouth . . . . .	wood.
Ditto . . . . .	Taunton . . . . .	wood.
Ditto . . . . .	Lancaster . . . . .	brick.
Insane Hospital . . . . .	Charlestown . . . . .	brick.
General Hospital . . . . .	Boston . . . . .	stone.
Theatre . . . . .	Boston . . . . .	brick.
Same rebuilt and enlarged . . . . .	do. . . . .	
Concert Hall, new interior and enlarged.		

## Banks :—

United States	.	.	.	.	Boston	.	.	.	.	brick.
Massachusetts	.	.	.	.	do	.	.	.	.	stone.
Boston	.	.	.	.	do.	.	.	.	.	brick.
Mechanicks'	.	.	.	.	do.	.	.	.	.	stone.
Union	.	.	.	.	do.	.	.	.	.	brick.
A bank in	.	.	.	.	Salem.	.	.	.	.	brick.

## Insurance Offices :—

Suffolk	.	.	.	.	Boston	.	.	.	.	brick.
Mutual	.	.	.	.	do.	.	.	.	.	interior.
New England	.	.	.	.	do.	.	.	.	.	stone.
Marine	.	.	.	.	do	.	.	.	.	stone.

## Schools :—

Grammar School	.	.	.	.	Boston	.	.	.	.	stone.
2 large school-houses	.	.	.	.	do.	.	.	.	.	brick.

## Entire Streets :—

Franklin Place	.	.	.	.	Boston	.	.	.	.	brick
Park Place	.	.	.	.	do.	.	.	.	.	brick.
Colonnade Row in Common Street					do.	.	.	.	.	brick.

## In Washington :—

Completing the Capitol of the United States.  
 Penitentiary Prison.  
 Unitarian Church.

Mr. Elbridge H. Goss, of Melrose, Mass., has lately contributed to the local newspaper of that town the following correspondence, found in his collection of autographs, between my grandfather and the Hon. Stephen Longfellow, of Maine, then a member of Congress, on the subject of the decorations for the pediment of the Capitol at Washington. Mr. Longfellow, who was the father of the poet, wrote a letter of inquiry to the architect as follows :—

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, Feb. 21, 1825.

DEAR SIR, — I have received a letter requesting answers to the following questions respecting the ornaments wanted for the pediment of the eastern portico of the Capitol. Will you have the goodness to answer them ?

1. In what material are the ornaments to be executed ?
2. Does the taste of the times lead to an imitation of *ancient* designs for similar purposes, or must all the allusions be *modern* ?
3. How high is the base of the pediment above the ground ?
4. Is the ground level, and, if so, at about what distance from the building would one take a position for viewing the pediment ?

Respectfully your ob't s't,

STEPHEN LONGFELLOW

CHARLES BULFINCH, Esq

On the reverse of the same sheet are Mr. Bulfinch's answers :—

In reply to the written inquiries, I answer :—

1st. That the material of the Pediment to be ornamented is a fine white freestone.

2d. That the object of advertising was to obtain designs in various styles, from which to select one. Artists are allowed to follow their taste in this respect, but it is not in my power to say what will be preferred, only that the design should not be perplexed, but easily comprehended.

3d. The base line of the Pediment is sixty-five feet from the ground.

4th. A level avenue as wide as the Pediment will be in front of it to the extent of 800 feet ; the sculpture will be in full view the whole of this distance ; and the best point to examine it will be about 100 feet in advance of the building.

Y'r ob'd't Ser't,

CHARLES BULFINCH.



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